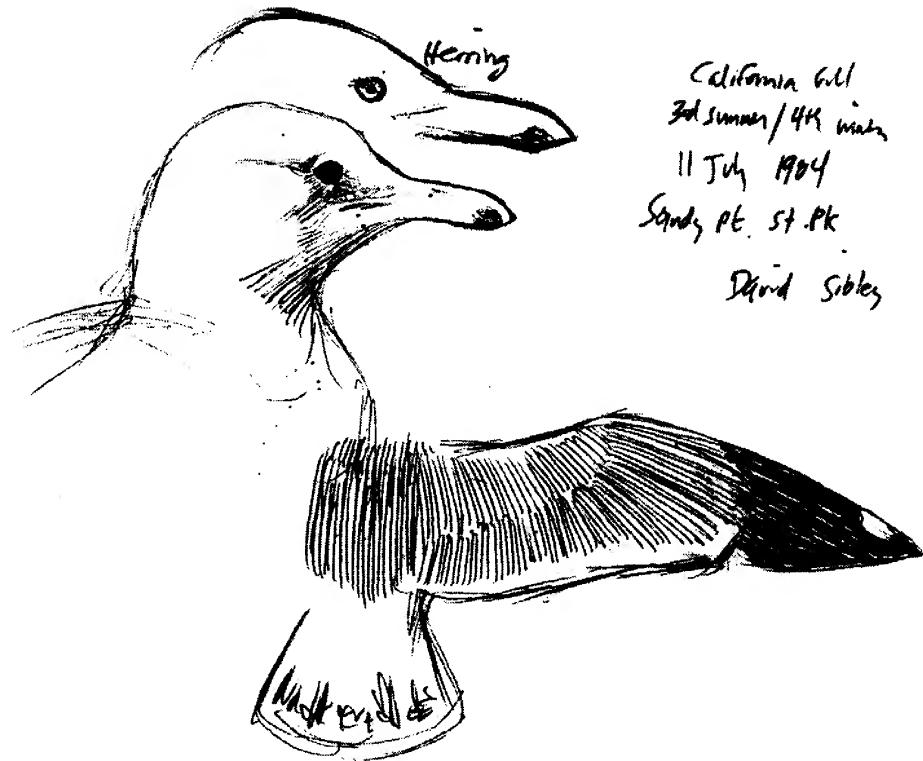




# MARYLAND BIRDLIFE

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# MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Cylburn Mansion, 4915 Greenspring Ave., Baltimore, Maryland 21209

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**Cover:** Sketch documenting Maryland's first accepted record of California Gull (88-15), drawn by David Sibley. Original sketch was graphically enhanced for publication by Steve Grennek



## FIRST REPORT OF THE MARYLAND/DC RECORDS COMMITTEE

BRUCE PETERJOHN AND PHIL DAVIS

The Maryland/DC Records Committee (MD/DCRC) was established in 1982 as a committee of the Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS). The MD/DCRC currently consists of nine voting members, a Chair elected by the members who may or may not be a voting member of the committee, and a non-voting Secretary. Voting members serve three-year terms, and are elected by the committee. After completing their terms, members must remain off of the committee for at least one year before being eligible for re-election. The voting members review the documentation for each report and assess whether or not this information adequately supports the claimed identification. The Secretary is responsible for cataloging the documentation received, circulating the records through the committee, and compiling the final decision once the review has been completed. The committee membership during the preparation of this summary consisted of Robert Dixon, Mary Gustafson, Mark Hoffman, David Holmes, Ottavio Janni, Willem Maane, Gail MacKiernan, Robert Norton, and Michael O'Brien as the voting members, Phil Davis as its Secretary, and Bruce Peterjohn as the non-voting Chair.

The primary function of the MD/DCRC is to develop and maintain a list of bird species whose occurrence has been documented within Maryland and the District of Columbia. However, these functions have evolved somewhat since its inception. Initially, the committee reviewed reports of rare birds that had been discovered after the publication of the "Field List of the Birds of Maryland" by Robbins and Bystrak (1977). The review of recent reports of rare birds remains one of its important functions. In order to develop an authoritative list of species that have been documented in Maryland and DC, the committee recognized the need to review some of the records published by Robbins and Bystrak (1977), and for some species, reports cited in Stewart and Robbins (1958). This review of older reports requires considerable time and effort, since the supporting evidence is not easily obtained. The committee has recently expended considerable effort to obtain the available information for many of these older reports, but their review will not be completed for several years.

During its existence, the committee has also reviewed reports of regional and local significance in addition to reviewing reports of statewide significance. For example, it formerly reviewed first county records of species as well as reports of species outside of their normal seasonal occurrence in the region. Such reports are no longer reviewed by the committee. The current emphasis of the committee is its review of reports of statewide and regional significance; a current list of the review species can be obtained from the Secretary. Additionally, all first reports for the District of Columbia are reviewed.

At its inception, the committee only reviewed reports from Maryland. When the District of Columbia records committee ceased functioning, the committee assumed responsibility for reports from that jurisdiction. The committee also reviews reports from allwaters of the Atlantic Ocean within the 200 mile exclusive economic zone that are directly east of Maryland.

This article provides the first published summary since its inception in 1982 of all reports for which the committee has completed its review. Three hundred and three reports are discussed below, some from as early as 1956 although most are after 1977. Of these reports, 198 (65%) were accepted. A number of additional reports are currently under review by the committee, and many more have been submitted to the committee and are awaiting review. The MD/DCRC hopes to publish similar summaries of its decisions on a regular basis in the future.

All reports reviewed by the MD/DCRC and related comments are available for public review. Requests for this information, copies of the goals and procedures of the committee, and the submission of all documentation for the committee's review should be directed to Phil Davis, MD/DCRC Secretary, 2549 Vale Court, Davidsonville, MD 21035. All reports reviewed by the committee are currently archived with the Secretary, although the committee is working with the MOS to develop a permanent location for storing this information.

## **THE ROLE OF THE MD/DC BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE**

All opinions in this section are those of the senior author, and may not represent those of the current or former committee members. The format for this discussion was provided by a similar discussion for the California Bird Records Committee by Heindel and Garrett (1995).

Just as the merits of individual bird sightings are frequently debated by members of the birding community, so have the roles of bird records committees been the subject of extensive debate. Unfortunately, the functions of bird records committees are frequently misunderstood. The general perception that these committees serve as "rarities police," whose only function is to sit in judgment over the sightings of other birders, is not accurate for the MD/DCRC. This section discusses the current role of the MD/DCRC, how the committee has interacted with the birding community in the past, and how we hope to improve these interactions in the future.

At the outset, it is important to recognize that the function of the MD/DCRC is not to "prove" or "disprove" any report. Providing such proof is normally beyond our means. Additionally, the fact that a report was not accepted does not mean that the bird in question was not present. Rather, the committee provides a collective decision as to whether the available evidence supports the claimed identification at a certain threshold of confidence, a threshold that varies from member to member depending upon their experiences with the species in question. The significance of the record also has a very important influence on establishing thisconfidence threshold. The more difficult the identification, or the more unexpected the report on the basis of date or geography, the more cautious some members may be in accepting reports. The importance attributed to these factors may vary from species to species. A continuum exists within the committee, from members requiring the same high level of documentation for all reports to other members requiring less documentation for some species but much greater levels

for others. There is no "right" or "wrong" approach, just nine individuals using their own philosophies to determine the confidence threshold of individual records.

The most important factor influencing the acceptance of a report is the "available evidence," not the philosophies of individual committee members. When the available evidence is compelling, even the most skeptical committee members readily vote for acceptance. The type of information necessary to exceed a member's confidence threshold certainly varies from species to species. Photographs, video tapes, and audio recordings are very helpful in the committee's deliberations, and by themselves may provide adequate documentation for many reports. For other reports, these materials may be insufficient to establish a bird's identity and must be supplemented with written descriptions. While a combination of photographic and written documentation is ideal, reports supported only by photographs or only by written documentation are given equal consideration by the committee.

An important component of written documentation is the description of the bird. This point may seem self-evident, yet some documentation received by the committee provides very brief and inadequate descriptions. A simple listing of several important field marks may not be very helpful, as these field marks may eliminate some but not all of the similar species. Statements such as "the bird had a typical tail pattern of an immature Mew Gull (*Larus canus*)" are not nearly as useful as an actual description of the color pattern on the tail. Hence, observers should try to provide descriptions of the entire bird including characteristics that may not seem important at the time of the observation. While the preparation of written documentation requires a fair amount of time, this time is well spent as it frequently results in improved identification skills and appreciation for the amount of variation exhibited in bird plumages. While the committee does not expect to receive voluminous descriptions for easily identified species such as Wood Storks (*Mycteria americana*), detailed descriptions are essential for difficult to identify species such as stints (*Calidris* sp.) or vagrant empidonax (*Empidonax* sp.) flycatchers.

An equally important component of written documentation is a description of the circumstances under which the observation occurred. The better each committee member understands the circumstances of the observation, the more comfortable and confident they become in evaluating the described field marks.

For reports that are not accepted, the available evidence may not mention certain important field marks or may suggest that the conditions of the sighting did not permit for the proper study of all necessary field marks. Only in rare instances does the available evidence suggest to the committee that a species was misidentified.

Hence, one of the important roles performed by the committee is to seek to obtain all of the available evidence before it reviews a report. Obtaining this evidence requires the cooperation of the committee and birding community. If the necessary information is not immediately provided, then the committee makes an effort to obtain it. Admittedly, the committee did not perform this function consistently in the past. Recently, it has collaborated with Marshall Iliff, Jim Stasz, and Bob Ringler (authors of the forthcoming revised checklist of Maryland birds) in undertaking considerable efforts to obtain evidence from both recent as well as numerous historic reports of unusual birds in the area. The cooperation from the birding community in providing this material is greatly appreciated.

The birding community should recognize its role in this process. Whenever a

species is discovered that is subject to review by the committee, the birding community should make an effort to provide the compelling evidence. The committee is frequently frustrated by reports of birds that were seen by "many individuals" or statements that photographs were taken, yet only a single brief written description is all that can be obtained. If this documentation is insufficient to meet the committee's confidence threshold for the species, then the report may not be accepted even though the committee believes that the bird was probably correctly identified. This scenario may apply to a number of the "Not Accepted" reports listed below. If birders have written descriptions, photographs, or other evidence for these reports that have not been previously submitted to the committee, please send this information to the Secretary and the report will be reviewed again.

The following example illustrates the importance of providing detailed descriptions and other evidence for rare birds, and how this evidence provides important scientific records of patterns of bird distribution. In the early 1970s, a relatively small number of Rufous Hummingbirds (*Selasphorus rufus*) had been confirmed in eastern North America. At that time, few other extralimital hummingbird species had been reported in the east, and the documentation for Rufous Hummingbirds normally emphasized the characteristics used to distinguish them from Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (*Archilochus colubris*). Within the past twenty years, however, the number of reports of extralimital hummingbirds in eastern North America has increased phenomenally. While Rufous remain the most widely reported of the western hummingbirds in the east, confirmed records of Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*) in Massachusetts, Broad-billed Hummingbird (*Cynanthus latirostris*) in Ontario, and Green Violet-ear (*Colibri thalassinus*) in North Carolina suggest that any species could appear almost anywhere.

Since the vagrancy pattern of hummingbirds is much more complex than previously thought, the older records of Rufous Hummingbird need to be re-assessed. Were these individuals correctly identified, or could they have been a similar species that was not even considered to be a possible vagrant in the area at that time? Only the information used to establish the identity of Rufous Hummingbirds in the 1970s exists today to eliminate all potential vagrant species. If the documentation includes only those field marks used to distinguish these individuals from Rubythroateds, then that information would not be sufficient to eliminate other *Selasphorus* hummingbirds and the identification of these records would currently be considered acceptable only as *Selasphorus* sp. However, if a complete description of the bird is available, then a positive identification may be possible (although in the case of adult female and immature Rufous Hummingbirds, such identification would usually require data obtained in the hand).

As new bird identification information becomes available, the committee may occasionally review again reports that have been "accepted" or "not accepted." Such reviews are important to ensure that all reports of a species are subject to the same level of scrutiny. For species whose characteristics may have been imperfectly known at the time of their discovery, such as extralimital stints (*Calidris* sp.), these additional reviews ensure that the original identification was consistent with current identification criteria.

These examples illustrate the importance of providing complete descriptions of all species subject to committee review, and also explain why some of the "older" records are no longer considered acceptable by the committee. The standards of "available evidence," used to accept sightings, have evolved within bird records committees. In the past, an observer's reputation was the primary factor used to determine the acceptabil-

ity of a report. If persons were believed to be reliable observers, then all of their reports were generally accepted even though the details and circumstances of the identifications remained unknown. Reports from newer birders were frequently omitted until their reputations were "proven." Today, bird records committees operate differently, requiring documentation for all rarities whether they are observed by the most experienced birders or by beginners. A birder's reputation by itself, in the absence of acceptable documentation, will never cause a report to be accepted.

An observer's experience and reputation are important factors considered by the committee in its review of reports. If individuals have previously shown that they can correctly identify difficult species, and understand how factors such as plumage variation and lighting conditions can influence their perceptions of field marks, then that experience will weigh in the favor of accepting a report. Such judgments may appear "unfair" to observers who provide similar descriptions of the same species, but do not receive the benefit of the doubt causing their reports to not be accepted. There are no easy answers to this problem, but perhaps an understanding of how the committee attempts to objectively consider an observer's experience during its reviews may be of value.

The most important function performed by the MD/DCRC is not its decisions on reports, but the creation of a historical data base documenting the status of rare birds in the area. As the number of records accumulates over the years, this data base will provide valuable knowledge on avian vagrancy and range expansions. The documentation associated with these reports will allow future researchers to make their own assessments of the validity of the records, since the criteria used to identify some species fifty years from now may be very different from what is used today. Through their cooperation with the MD/DCRC, the birding community provides a very important historical record in a more scientific manner than in the past. This system is by no means perfect, but it allows individuals to assess the merits of each report in a more objective fashion, and not based solely on an observer's "reputation."

The MD/DCRC recognizes that its decisions are one of its important functions, but these decisions may have some undesired results such as discouraging observers from submitting additional reports. Observers who take the time to submit documentation to the committee certainly care whether or not their reports are accepted. Most people probably experience a mixture of anger and/or frustration when their records are not accepted, which is understandable. Service on the committee does not necessarily mean automatic acceptance of one's reports; most committee members have one or more sightings in the list of "Not Accepted" reports. While removing one's ego from the process may not be entirely possible, it is a worthwhile goal. Feedback makes a person a better birder in the future, and an increased awareness of identification information available in the literature makes one more likely to provide better documentation. To that end, the committee needs to provide observers with better information about the rationale used in its decisions. Some of that information is provided in the accounts below.

Through improved communication, the MD/DCRC hopes that a larger segment of the birding community will cooperate with its functions. The "human" qualities of both birders and bird records committees can never be entirely removed from the process. The actions and decisions of the committee are by no means perfect and hopefully future ornithologists will find few errors among the records that it has accepted. Rather than emphasizing past decisions, the committee is attempting through these summaries to provide the birding community with better identification information to help improve

future documentation. As the birding community provides more and even better documentation, our collective knowledge of the status of Maryland and District of Columbia birds will correspondingly improve. Attaining this better knowledge is a worthwhile goal that everyone can help achieve.

The following abbreviations are used for Maryland counties: ALGY, Allegany; ANAR, Anne Arundel; BALT, Baltimore; CLVT, Calvert; CRLN, Caroline; CARR, Carroll; CECL, Cecil; CHAS, Charles; DORC, Dorchester; FRDK, Frederick; GARR, Garrett; HARF, Harford; HWRD, Howard; KENT, Kent; MONT, Montgomery; PGEO, Prince Georges; QUAN, Queen Anne's; STMA, St. Mary's; SMST, Somerset; TLBT, Talbot; WASH, Washington; WICO, Wicomico; WORC, Worcester. In the following accounts, \* indicates that photographs were submitted for a record; + indicates a record of a specimen. The committee reference number for each record is included in parentheses.

Observer abbreviations are also included within the parentheses. All individuals who provided written descriptions, photographs, or other documentation to the committee are cited for each record. The observer who provided the most thorough documentation for a record is generally cited first; this observer may or may not have initially discovered the bird. For many records, the person who discovered the bird may not have provided any documentation to the committee, while for some records, the identity of the discoverer is not even known to the committee. Our intention is not to deny recognition to observers who discover rare birds, but only to indicate those individuals who provided information to the committee. The term et al. is used for reports where multiple observers were known to have been present but only the cited individual(s) actually provided documentation to the committee.

Reports of species whose names are surrounded by brackets are no longer reviewed by the committee. The committee does not normally resolve identification issues below the species level, except for a few well-marked subspecies that were considered full species prior to recent taxonomic revisions. In the following accounts, comments on identification, age, and sex are the responsibility of the senior author, but are usually based on comments made by committee members during review of the record. All taxonomy follows the most recent (Sixth Edition) AOU Check-list (1983) and its subsequent supplements through July 1995.

## ACCEPTED RECORDS

This section includes all records accepted by the MD/DCRC since its inception in 1982. For some species, these records constitute all of their known occurrences within Maryland and the District of Columbia. For most species, however, these records represent only a portion of their occurrences reported in the literature.

### EARED GREBE *Podiceps nigricollis*

Masonville, BALT, 7-15 April 1981 (RB, \*RR et al.; 86-11); Piney Run Reservoir, CARR, 27 September 1982 (RR; 86-12); Ft. Smallwood Park, ANAR, 28 April 1983 (HW, WK et al.; 86-13); Hart-Miller Island, BALT, 16 October 1983 (RB, \*RR et al.; 86-15); Back River, BALT, 16 January 1984 (\*RR; 87-18); North Beach, CLVT, 13-18 April 1987 (JS; 87-28); Chesapeake Beach, CLVT, 2 May 1987 (EB, \*JS; 87-29); Hart-Miller Island, BALT, 30 August 1987, (RR et al.; 88-25); Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 22 August—21 December 1989 (\*AH, RII, SR et al.; 92-01); South River, ANAR, 27 March 1990 (MI; 92-20); Hains Point, DC, 15 April 1990 (\*DC, GG; DC009); Ocean City, WORC, 10-16 February 1991 (\*MO; 92-06).



**Eared Grebe (92-01), Photo by Al Haury**

A fairly typical set of records for a species known to be a rare but regular migrant and winter visitor in eastern North America, where the majority of reports occur between October and April (Buckley 1968, Banks and Clapp 1987). The number of Maryland reports has increased steadily since 1967, with most from the Coastal Plain. Reports of Eared Grebes from the Coastal Plain and Piedmont of Maryland are no longer reviewed by the committee.

Molting Eared Grebes remain a challenge to positively identify, especially during spring. In these transitional plumages, none of the plumage characteristics may be adequate to conclusively distinguish Eared Grebes from the much more numerous Horned Grebes. Even differences in head shape may not be useful in molting birds. Differences in bill size and shape are crucial for identification of these individuals.

#### WESTERN GREBE *Aechmophorus occidentalis*

Broadford Reservoir, GARR, 11 June 1981 (FP, \*CPh et al.; 83-02); Loch Raven Reservoir, BALT, 16 December 1984—6 January 1985 (RR, \*PN et al.; 88-01).

Both individuals were photographed, clearly eliminating the similar Clark's Grebe. Even though vagrant Clark's Grebes are virtually unknown along the Atlantic coast, all *Aechmophorus* grebes in Maryland should be identified on the basis of a careful study of all field marks, paying special attention to bill color and face pattern. See Eckert (1993) for the most recent discussion of the identification of Western and Clark's Grebes.

The Garrett County record is exceptional, furnishing one of very few summer records from eastern North America. The Baltimore County grebe is more typical of

vagrant Western Grebes along the Atlantic coast, where most have been found between November and April as migrants and winter visitors.

**YELLOW-NOSED ALBATROSS** *Diomedea chlororhynchos*

Atlantic Ocean off Ocean City, 1 February 1975 (RRo, \*JK et al.; 90-06).

Many birders have sailed out of Ocean City during subsequent winters, waiting in vain for a repeat of this record. It remains the only substantiated winter record for this species in the western North Atlantic. Off North America, most vagrant Yellow-nosed Albatrosses have been noted between April and October, especially during July and August (McDaniel 1973, Hoffman 1994).

**WILSON'S STORM-PETREL** *Oceanites oceanicus*

Chesapeake Bay off WICO, 23 July 1991 (POs et al.; 92-16).

Small numbers of Wilson's Storm-Petrels regularly wander into Chesapeake Bay during the summer, especially between late June and mid-August. On the bay, reports within and south of Anne Arundel and Queen Anne's Counties are no longer reviewed by the committee.

**WHITE-FACED STORM-PETREL** *Pelagodroma marina*

Baltimore Canyon in the Atlantic Ocean, 22 August 1993 (\*LL et al.; 94-04).

This was another pelagic trip that many Maryland birders wish they had taken. This species has proven to be a rare but regular visitor to the western North Atlantic from North Carolina north to southern New England (Lee 1995, Watson et al. 1986), so additional records from Maryland waters are possible. These storm-petrels are most likely to be found over the continental slope at depths of at least 300-500 fathoms from early August through early October.

**BROWN PELICAN** *Pelecanus occidentalis*

Liberty Reservoir, BALT, 14-18 Oct. 1981 (HK, \*RR, et al.; 92-17);

Conowingo Dam, HARF, 22 December 1986 (\*RF; 92-18).

Despite increasing numbers of Brown Pelicans along the Mid-Atlantic coast and the lower Chesapeake Bay, inland occurrences remain very unusual. The Conowingo Dam pelican was exceptionally late, as this species is quite rare along the Maryland coast during late December.

**GREAT CORMORANT** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Martinak State Park, CRLN, 7 March 1981 (ES et al.; 83-03); Conowingo Dam, HARF, 29 January 1989 (RS, et al.; 89-06); Sycamore Landing, MONT, 26 September 1989 (MO; 91-20).

While Great Cormorants regularly occur on freshwater habitats in Europe, they remain rare visitors to these habitats in North America. Any suspected Great Cormorant on freshwater should be carefully distinguished from the much more numerous Double-

crested Cormorant (*P. auritus*). The identification of adults poses few problems, but immatures are more troublesome as their plumages are more variable than shown in most field guides. In the absence of meaningful size comparisons, observers should concentrate on color of the bill, lores, and gular pouch to conclusively establish the identity of immatures. The committee currently reviews reports of this species only from locations west of the Coastal Plain and upstream from Conowingo Dam on the Susquehanna River.

**ANHINGA *Anhinga anhinga***

Ft. Smallwood Park, ANAR, 9 May 1981 (RB, JOr et al.; 85-12); Berlin, WORC, 7-8 May 1983 (MH, \*FB; 85-14).

Even though summering Anhingas regularly occur north to the southeast corner of Virginia, they very infrequently wander north of their established range in the Mid-Atlantic states. Most vagrants appear during spring, primarily between mid-April and mid-May; these records represent typical spring dates.

**FRIGATEBIRD SP. *Fregata* sp.**

Assateague Island, WORC, 30 April 1984 (MH; 87-19); Potomac River, DC, 3 Oct. 1988 (\*RC, JWl; DC005).

The committee has taken a conservative stance towards the identification of vagrant frigatebirds in Maryland and DC. Even though Magnificent Frigatebird (*F. magnificens*) is the most likely candidate for vagrancy based on geographic probabilities, the committee is unwilling to assume that this species is the only one to occur within the area since there are also records of vagrant Great Frigatebirds (*F. minor*) from North America. The field identification of frigatebirds poses a significant challenge, especially because soaring individuals seldom provide an opportunity to carefully study the field marks needed to distinguish the two species. Positive identification of photographed frigatebirds may not be even possible under most circumstances. Hence, most records of vagrant frigatebirds will not be identifiable to species. For additional information on field identification of these two species of frigatebirds, see Howell (1994).

[LEAST BITTERN *Ixobrychus exilis*]

Lilypons, FRDK, 9 February 1992 (TW et al.; 92-32).

The only February record for Maryland, surprisingly from a regular nesting location on the Piedmont rather than from marshes along the Eastern Shore.

[WHITE IBIS *Eudocimus albus*]

Blackwater NWR, DORC, 7-28 March 1988 (BJ, SE, ML, DLo et al.; 8904).

The earliest Maryland spring record, during a season when this species is a rare visitor to the state. Most White Ibis appear as post-breeding visitors between late June and early September.

**ROSEATE SPOONBILL *Ajaia ajaja***

Smith Island, SMST, 14 April—19 September 1979 (DB et al.; 83-01).

This individual was observed sporadically during the period, during which it molted into adult plumage. This record was unprecedented at the time. However, Roseate Spoonbill populations have been slowly increasing during subsequent years, and additional extralimital individuals have been noted north to the lower Great Lakes region. The possibility of another non-breeding spoonbill appearing in Maryland is not out of the question.

WOOD STORK *Mycteria americana*

Hampton, BALT, 11-25 July 1989 (\*DC, HM, EW et al.; 90-08); Cove Point, CLVT, 5 August 1989 (\*MO; 91-30).

Along the Mid-Atlantic coast, Wood Storks are known primarily as post-breeding visitors with most sightings between late June and mid-August. These two records represent typical dates. The number of extralimital Wood Stork sightings has noticeably decreased during recent decades, reflecting declines in breeding populations in the southeastern U.S.



Wood Stork (90-08), Photo by David Czaplak

FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK *Dendrocygna bicolor*

Eastern Neck NWR, KENT, 24 November 1979 (RR et al.; 86-22); Blackwater NWR, DORC, 11-20 November 1989 (HM, \*GA, RH, \*MMu, \*SS et al.; 91-02).

When they wander into Maryland, Fulvous Whistling-Ducks may appear as individuals or flocks. At least 35 were present at Eastern Neck N.W.R., while the Blackwater

N.W.R. record initially involved a flock of 36 whistling-ducks. Both of these records were during November; however, this species is nomadic and could appear in Maryland during any month of the year.

**ROSS' GOOSE *Chen rossii***

Blackwater NWR, DORC, 27 November 1981 (PO, \*MO et al.; 94-17); Blackwater NWR, DORC, 31 December 1984 (MO et al.; 92-34); Blackwater NWR, DORC, 25 November—11 December 1989 (HA, GA, \*DC, HM, PO, MO et al.; 90-09); Blackwater NWR, DORC, 4 January—8 February 1992 (\*MG et al.; 92-39); Blackwater NWR, DORC, 17 January 1993 (\*MG et al.; 94-11); Starr, QUAN, 28 November 1993 (MI, JS; 94-41); Snow Hill, WORC, 15 October 1994 (MO et al.; 94-42).

The field identification of Ross' Geese initially posed problems for the committee, especially distinguishing this species from Ross' X Snow Goose hybrids. For example, the 1981 record from Blackwater N.W.R. was not accepted initially, because the possibility of its being a hybrid was not satisfactorily eliminated at that time. Once additional information on the identification of these hybrids became available (see Trauger et al. 1971, Roberson 1993), this record was reviewed again and accepted.

North American populations of Ross' Geese have been increasing throughout the twentieth century (Ryder 1969), resulting in a dramatic eastward expansion in both the breeding and wintering ranges. In recent years, small numbers have regularly wintered among the Snow Goose (*C. caerulescens*) flocks along the Atlantic coast from New Jersey to North Carolina. Ross' Geese could occur in any large flock of Snow Geese encountered along the Coastal Plain of Maryland. Given their regular occurrence on portions of the Coastal Plain, the committee no longer reviews reports from the Eastern Shore. However, we urge that all Ross' Geese on the Coastal Plain should still be carefully identified with an emphasis on the bill and head characteristics needed to eliminate the possibility of hybrids.

**CINNAMON TEAL *Anas cyanoptera***

Horsehead Farm Sanctuary, QUAN, 15 September—4 November 1987 (\*RR, BH et al.; 88-21).

While the identification of this male was not questioned, its origins generated considerable debate within the committee. Cinnamon Teal are regularly kept in captivity, which complicates the assessment of extralimital reports of this species and many other waterfowl. Since this individual was associated with Bluewinged Teal (*A. discors*) during the normal fall migration periods for both species, and appeared following a drought year within its normal range when there were other extralimital records of Cinnamon Teal in eastern North America, the committee believed that this individual was most likely a wild bird.

**[EURASIAN WIGEON *Anas penelope*]**

Piney Run Park, CARR, 2 April 1985, (EW, MHa; 88-22); Loch Raven Reservoir, BALT, 15-19 March 1988 (HK, RB, HM, MMu et al.; 88-23).

Typical spring dates for this rare but regular migrant and winter visitor in Maryland.

**KING EIDER *Somateria spectabilis***

Ocean City, WORC, 18 May—2 August 1991 (\*MO et al.; 92-36); Laytonsville, MONT, 5-9 November 1991 (\*MO, RH et al.; 92-37).

The Ocean City eider provided one of very few summering records from the Mid-Atlantic region, at a location where small numbers appear during most winters. Since most Maryland records are from the Atlantic coast or Chesapeake Bay, the Laytonsville record was remarkable for the Piedmont region.

**HARLEQUIN DUCK *Histrionicus histrionicus***

Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 4 November 1989 (\*MI et al.; 91-03); Elliott Island, DORC, 9 May 1992 (HA; 92-38).

The Elliott Island record represents the latest spring occurrence in Maryland. On Chesapeake Bay, the committee currently reviews reports only north of Anne Arundel and Queen Anne's counties.

[BLACK SCOTER *Melanitta nigra*]

Hains Point, DC, 1 November 1988 (DC; DC006).

A first record for DC, on a typical date for an inland fall migrant.

**SWALLOW-TAILED KITE *Elanoides forficatus***

Owings Mills, BALT, 25 May 1978 (JSm; 86-06); Tanyard, CRLN, 13 May 1983 (KT; 86-08).

Additional reports are under review by the committee. The number of extralimital records of these kites has noticeably increased during recent years within the mid-Atlantic region. They have become very rare but fairly regular spring visitors, with most records from the Coastal Plain and Piedmont during May and early June; these records fit this pattern of vagrancy.

**MISSISSIPPI KITE *Ictinia mississippiensis***

Rockville, MONT, 11 May 1990 (MO; 91-22); Fort Smallwood Park, ANAR, 7 June 1994 (SR; 94-39).

Many additional reports are under review by the committee. These kites are primarily late spring and summer visitors to the Mid-Atlantic Region, with most records during May and June from the Coastal Plain and Piedmont. The number of reports has markedly increased during the 1990s, perhaps reflecting increased populations in the southeastern U.S. Their breeding range currently extends northward to southern Virginia, but as the number of late spring and summer records increases north of this range, breeding in Maryland is a possibility. If seen well, Mississippi Kites are not likely to be confused with any other North American hawk. However, many reports have generated considerable debate within the committee as they pertain to individuals seen very briefly in flight, frequently in poor lighting conditions, with the observers not having an opportunity to study and describe all of the important field marks. These factors have resulted in a fairly high rate of "not accepted" reports.

**SWAINSON'S HAWK *Buteo swainsoni***

Ft. Smallwood Park, ANAR, 17 April 1984 (WK; 85-17).

This record is remarkable, as there are very few additional spring reports east of the Appalachian Mountains. Most Coastal Plain reports are during fall migration, when

small numbers pass through Cape May, New Jersey each year and probably fly over eastern Maryland as they head toward their South American winter range. Fall migrants in Maryland should be looked for during September and October.

Swainson's Hawks also have a relatively high rate of "not accepted" reports, a result of the limited opportunity to carefully study the critical field marks as the hawks quickly pass by in migration. Immatures are the most likely age class to appear in Maryland. Observers should pay close attention to the wing pattern and other characteristics of these individuals because they are not as readily identifiable as adults.

[GOLDEN EAGLE *Aquila chrysaetos*]

Georgetown Reservoir, DC, 22 October 1988 (\*DC, TW; DC004).

The first record for DC, but a very typical fall migration date for this species.

YELLOW RAIL *Coturnicops noveboracensis*

Pinto Marsh, ALGY, 17 October 1993 (+SM, 94-33); Jug Bay, ANAR, 4 October 1980 (+WM, MPe, 95-18).

As a result of their very secretive habits, the status and habitat preferences of Yellow Rails in Maryland remain poorly understood. The Allegany County record is the first west of the Piedmont, and may show that Yellow Rails are more widely distributed than the few previous reports indicate.

LIMPKIN *Aramus guarauna*

Lilypons, FRDK, 25 May—8 June 1971 (\*RRo et al.; 95-14); Lake Way Drive (Benson Branch), HWRD, 26 May—10 June 1985 (JSO, \*MM et al.; 86-26).

These records represent the most northerly occurrences of Limpkins in North America (AOU 1983). The similarity of dates, separated by 14 years, is remarkable.



Limpkin (88-26), Photo by Mike McClure

**SANDHILL CRANE *Grus canadensis***

Tilghman, TLBT, 27 November 1982 (\*LR; 85-19); Pinto Marsh, ALGY, 26 April 1984 (TS, \*DJ et al.; 87-08); Woodbine, HWRD, 28 March 1986 (\*DS; 87-09); Little Bennett Regional Park, MONT, 2 May 1987 (ED et al.; 87-33); Bittinger, GARR, 16 August—15 September 1989 (\*BT et al.; 91-16); Trappe, TLBT, 28 February—20 March 1991 (\*MO et al.; 94-12); Wye Mills, QUAN, 4-9 January 1994 (GT; 94-13).

Of these records, the crane at Bittinger, Garrett County is most noteworthy as the only accepted summer report for the state. While Sandhill Cranes could potentially appear anywhere in Maryland during any month of the year, most records pertain to migrants and winter visitors between late October and March from the Coastal Plain and Piedmont. The eastern population of Sandhill Cranes has noticeably increased and expanded its breeding range in recent decades (Hoffman 1989; Tebbel and Ankeny 1982), as reflected in the increased numbers of reports from Maryland since 1980. The committee no longer reviews reports from the Coastal Plain and Piedmont.

**PIPING PLOVER *Charadrius melanotos***

Cove Point, CLVT, 2 May 1987 (EB, JS et al.; 87-34).

This individual was probably a spring migrant. The committee currently reviews records of Piping Plovers along Chesapeake Bay north of Anne Arundel and Queen Anne's counties.

**BLACK-NECKED STILT *Himantopus mexicanus***

Hart-Miller Island, BALT, 25 May—1 June 1986 (HK, \*RR et al.; 8722); Cove Point, CLVT, 17 May 1987 (JS; 87-35); Potomac River, DC 21 July 1991 (MJ; DC010).

The record from the Potomac River near National Airport is the first for DC. The stilt population breeding along the Mid-Atlantic coast has markedly increased during recent decades, resulting in increased numbers of reports from Maryland's Eastern Shore. The committee no longer reviews reports from the Coastal Plain.

**[AMERICAN AVOCET *Recurvirostra americana*]**

Lake Elkhorn, HWRD, 15 March 1987 (D&MW, \*RSo, DHe; 87-36); Potomac River, DC, 26 August 1990 (DC, RH; DC008).

Four avocets on the Potomac River provided the first well documented record for DC.

**[LESSER YELLOWLEGS *Tringa flavipes*]**

Lilypons, FRDK, 9 January 1985 (MO; 91-28).

An unusual mid-winter record from the Piedmont.

**LONG-BILLED CURLEW *Numenius americanus***

Deal Island WMA, SMST, 12 June 1976 (PP; 88-03); Brandywine, PGEO, 30 August-12 September 1987 (\*EW, \*DC, RR, CSw et al.; 88-04).

The only documented twentieth century records from Maryland. Along the Atlantic coast north of North Carolina, these curlews remain accidental visitors with most recent records pertaining to fall migrants.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*

Hart-Miller Island, BALT, 20 September 1987 (HK; 89-01).

The field identification of extralimital small *Calidris* sandpipers in North America poses a very difficult challenge, as the distinguishing field marks tend to be subtle and require careful study. The differences between species are frequently based on subjective characteristics, and may require corroboration by photographs or specimens to conclusively establish an identification. While the identification of these species has been discussed in considerable detail by Grant (1984) and Veit and Jonsson (1984), much remains to be learned about them.

[WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER *Calidris fuscicollis*]

Lilypons, FRDK, 3-6 December 1988 (SW; 90-10).

A very late fall record for Maryland, especially on the Piedmont.

[BAIRD'S SANDPIPER *Calidris bairdii*]

Triadelphia Reservoir, HWRD, 12 September 1982 (HM, MMu, \*RSo, \*DH; 83-10); Hart-Miller Island, BALT, 10 December 1983 (\*RR et al.; 8805).

The Hart-Miller Island record is easily the latest fall date for Maryland, and provides one of very few photographically confirmed December records from North America (see Jehl 1979). The bird at Triadelphia Reservoir provided the first Howard County record.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*

Hart-Miller Island, BALT, 19 October 1985 (HK, \*RR, RB, HM et al.; 86-27); Hart-Miller Island, BALT, 17 May 1992 (SR, \*OJ, JS et al.; 94-34).

The only two accepted records for Maryland. The May date is fairly typical for a spring migrant, while the juvenile in October provided a relatively late fall date for the Mid-Atlantic region. Given their regular occurrence in small numbers along Delaware Bay during spring and fall, the paucity of accepted records from Maryland is somewhat surprising.

While the identification of breeding-plumaged adults poses few challenges, juveniles and winter-plumaged adults are more difficult. Additionally, these non-breeding plumages are poorly described in most field guides. Claims of Curlew Sandpipers in these plumages should rely on more than just the white rump patch for identification, as this field mark can be difficult to observe accurately under many circumstances. Observers should also describe the underparts, upperparts, and differences in shape as compared with Dunlin (*C. alpina*) in order to provide a convincing description.

[BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER *Tryngites subruficollis*]

Green Manor Turf Farm, HWRD, 15 September 1979 (RB; 83-21).

The first county record, but on a typical date for a fall migrant.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*

Blackwater NWR, DORC, 16-17 April 1982 (WE et al.; 87-23); Blackwater NWR, DORC,

23-25 April 1982 (LC et al.; 87-24); Lilypons, FRDK, 17 April 1988 (BV et al.; 89-07); Jug Bay Wetlands, ANAR, 9 April 1991 (DM et al.; 94-08); Hart-Miller Island, BALT, 4 September 1991 (MO et al.; 94-09).

The Lilypons record is unusual for the Piedmont, as most Maryland Ruffs appear on the Coastal Plain. These dates are representative of spring and fall occurrences within the state. This species is a rare but regular migrant along the Coastal Plain of the entire Mid-Atlantic region, and the committee no longer reviews records from the Maryland Coastal Plain.

[RED-NECKED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus lobatus*]

Seneca, MONT, 26-29 September 1991 (MO, PO et al.; 94-14); Elliott Island, DORC, 9 May 1992 (HA; 94-16); Emmitsburg, FRDK, 31 August-4 September 1993 (PO; 94-15).

Typical dates for Maryland, but the records from Seneca and Emmitsburg are noteworthy from the Piedmont where these phalaropes are rare migrants.

RED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus fulicaria*

Columbia, HWRD, 1-12 October 1982 (SEc, JSO, \*EW, \*DH, MC et al.; 92-23); Hart-Miller Island, BALT, 14 August—2 October 1988 (HK, PK et al.; 90-05); Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 24 September 1989 (SR, LD et al.; 91-05); Centennial Park, HWRD, 21 October 1989 (JW; 91-06); Frederick, FRDK, 22-23 September 1990 (\*SM, \*ET; 91-07); Sycamore Landing, MONT, 26 September 1991 (MO, PO et al.; 94-22).

The 14 August date from Hart-Miller Island is exceptionally early for an inland migrant during autumn; the other dates are more typical for fall migration. While it is a regular migrant offshore, this species remains the rarest phalarope within inland counties. The committee no longer reviews reports from the Coastal Plain and Piedmont.



Red Phalarope (92-23), Photo by David Holmes

POMARINE JAEGER *Stercorarius pomarinus*  
Seneca, MONT, 8-9 July 1990 (PO, \*DC; 92-25).

Even though this species may be encountered offshore during the summer months, this record is truly remarkable as there are very few early July reports anywhere from the interior of the United States.

LONG-TAILED JAEGER *Stercorarius longicaudus*  
Atlantic Ocean off Ocean City, 28 September 1991 (\*DC, \*MO et al.; 92-27).

The status of Long-tailed Jaegers in Maryland's offshore waters remains to be conclusively determined. This species is a regular and fairly common migrant in the offshore waters of North Carolina (Lee 1986, 1989, 1995). Hence, their status is probably fairly similar far offshore in Maryland waters, perhaps beyond the range of most pelagic birding trips.

The identification of adult Long-tailed Jaegers is not difficult under reasonable viewing conditions. However, identifying immatures in the field has always posed a difficult challenge, and most reports from the western North Atlantic pertain to immatures. Identification of birds in the hand has fooled many ornithologists, and a number of skins have been recently re-identified based on current knowledge of the characteristics used to distinguish immature jaegers (Lee 1989). The plumages of immature Long-taileds are variable, and while some of these plumages are fairly distinctive, others are similar to immature Parasitic Jaegers (*S. parasiticus*) (see Olsen (1989) for discussions of the field identification of immature Long-tailed Jaegers). These field identification problems are complicated by the challenge of observing detailed plumage characters of fast-flying jaegers from a moving boat. Depending upon the plumage of the individual jaeger, observation of the necessary field marks and obtaining convincing documentation of birds believed to be immature Longtailed Jaegers may not be possible under some circumstances.

FRANKLIN'S GULL *Larus pipixcan*

Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 11-17 May 1976 (HW et al.; 88-07); Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 21 May 1976 (\*CW et al.; 93-01); Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 19 June 1987 (\*MO; 88-09); Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 1 July 1987 (\*MO; 88-10).

In Maryland, most Franklin's Gulls have been discovered between May and October on the upper Chesapeake Bay and its western tributaries. These accepted records are consistent with this pattern of occurrence. The majority of reports were during the 1970s and 1980s, including many that have not been reviewed by the committee, but the number of sightings has sharply decreased during the 1990s. Despite this recent decrease, the committee no longer reviews reports from the western tributaries of Chesapeake Bay from Anne Arundel and Prince Georges counties northward.

This species is most likely to be confused with Laughing Gulls (*L. atricilla*). While distinguishing between the immatures of these two species posed a problem during the 1970s, their identification is now well covered in the standard field guides.

LITTLE GULL *Larus minutus*  
Conowingo Dam, HARF, 6 December 1987 (RB; 88-20).

Although slightly inland from Chesapeake Bay where this species appears regularly in small numbers, this individual was discovered at a location known to attract unusual gulls. The committee no longer reviews reports from the Susquehanna River below Conowingo Dam.

**BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus***

Conowingo Dam, CECL, 6-9 December 1987 (RB et al.; 89-02); Conowingo Dam, HARF, 6-9 December 1987 (RB et al.; 89-02).

A single individual produced both county records. Small numbers of Common Black-headed Gulls have been fairly regular visitors to Conowingo Dam during late fall and winter of recent years, and the committee no longer reviews reports from this location.

**CALIFORNIA GULL *Larus californicus***

Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 11 July 1984 (DSi, HW et al.; 88-15); Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 14 August 1984 (MO, \*JO; 87-25); Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 29 October 1990 (\*MO, RB et al.; 9127).

As more observers spend more time searching through large concentrations of gulls in recent years, this species has been more frequently reported from the Mid-Atlantic region. It remains a very rare visitor with most reports during fall and winter. However, as the first two records from Sandy Point State Park indicate, California Gulls can appear during any season.

The identification of California Gulls in eastern North America remains a difficult challenge, especially in sub-adult plumages. The plumages of immature Herring Gulls (*L. argentatus*) are extremely variable, and can appear very similar to immature California Gulls. Adult California Gulls are also more variable than indicated in most field guides, especially the larger and paler-mantled race (*L. californicus albertaensis*) which breeds in the eastern portion of its range (Jehl 1987). Hence, descriptions of all relevant field marks should accompany any claim of California Gull from Maryland.

**YELLOW-LEGGED GULL *Larus cachinnans***

Georgetown Reservoir, DC, 1-6 February 1990 (\*DC, CW, WMa, RH et al.; DC001); Georgetown Reservoir, DC, 18 December 1990—21 March 1991 (\*DC, \*OJ, RH et al.; DC003); Laytonsville, MONT, 5 January-16 March 1991 (MO, PO, DC, RH et al.; 91-24); Georgetown Reservoir, DC, 26 December 1991—23 February 1992 (RH, \*MG et al.; DC007).

A single individual is believed to be responsible for all of these records, establishing the third confirmed North American record of this species. Despite extensive descriptions and photographs, its subspecific identification remains in question. See Wilds and Czapla (1994) for a detailed description of this individual and a summary of the North American status of Yellow-legged Gull.

Sub-adult Herring Gulls (*L. argentatus*) will occasionally show a yellowish tinge to their legs, and there have even been a few reports of adults with yellow legs but otherwise typical characteristics of that species. Additionally, some Yellow-legged Gulls may not have yellow legs. Hence, leg color by itself is insufficient for the identification of Yellow-legged Gulls which also differ with regards to mantle color, extent of head streaking, wing-tip pattern, and other characteristics.

**BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla***

Hart-Miller Island, BALT, 23 October 1983 (RB, RR; 86-28); North Beach, CLVT, 1 November 1985 (\*JS; 94-30); Bellevue, TLBT, 9 October 1988 (HA et al.; 89-08); Conowingo Dam, HARF, 14 December 1992 (\*MG, BO, JWo et al.; 94-31).

Despite its regular occurrence offshore, Black-legged Kittiwakes remain very rare visitors anywhere on Chesapeake Bay. The Conowingo Dam record is exceptional for

an inland location. The Bellevue record is very early for a fall migrant, as most do not appear until November or December.

**ROSS' GULL *Rhodostethia rosea***

Back River Sewage Plant, BALT, 3 March—24 April 1990 (but not between 12 March-13 April) (ESc, \*DC, \*GJ, MO, CRo et al.; 91-04).

To date, this record remains the most southerly occurrence of Ross' Gull documented by photographs along the Atlantic coast. Once an exceptional rarity in North America away from northern Alaska, the number of extralimital reports has increased during recent years. They are most likely to be discovered during late fall/early winter and as spring migrants during March and April (Bledsoe and Sibley 1985). Perhaps another individual will grace Maryland waters in the near future.

**SABINE'S GULL *Xema sabini***

Atlantic Ocean east of Ocean City, 9 May 1976 (RRo et al.; 86-17); Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 21 May 1976 (CC, HW et al.; 86-18).

Sabine's Gulls remain extremely rare migrants anywhere along the Atlantic coast, both in onshore and offshore waters. The May dates are typical of its spring passage, although the appearance of one at Sandy Point State Park was totally unexpected away from the immediate coast. Because this species is a rare but fairly regular fall migrant on the eastern Great Lakes, its appearance in Maryland during that season is not out of the question when it is most likely to be discovered during late September or October.

**GULL-BILLED TERN *Sterna nilotica***

Hurlock sewage ponds, DORC, 6 August 1989 (MO; 92-02); Hart-Miller Island, BALT, 9 June 1991 (HK et al.; 92-03); Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 10 July 1985 (\*MO, 94-07).

While Gull-billed Terns regularly forage over fields and marshes near the coast, the Hurlock record was unusually far inland. However, its appearance coincided with the normal postbreeding movements of this species. The record from Hart-Miller Island was remarkable for the upper Chesapeake Bay. The committee no longer reviews reports from the Chesapeake Bay within and south from Anne Arundel and Queen Anne's counties.

**SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis***

Pt. Lookout, STMA, 31 August 1983 (EW et al.; 87-15). Hart-Miller Island, BALT, 8 June 1986 (HK, PK, MP; 87-14); North Beach, CLVT, 20 August 1987 (JS; 88-19).

Small numbers of post-breeding Sandwich Terns are known to move regularly into portions of Chesapeake Bay. The August dates from Pt. Lookout and North Beach are typical of these movements, and the committee no longer reviews reports from the Chesapeake Bay within and south from Anne Arundel and Queen Anne's counties. The record from Hart-Miller Island was very unusual for upper Chesapeake Bay, especially during early June as they would be most likely to appear in late summer or early autumn.

**ROSEATE TERN *Sterna dougallii***

Ocean City inlet, WORC, 18 June 1991 (MO; 94-18); Fourth Street flats at Ocean City, WORC, 7-8 June 1992 (MO, \*MHo et al.; 94-19); Fourth Street flats at Ocean City, WORC, 18 June—9 July 1994 (MI, \*MHo, \*GJ et al.; 94-20).

The individuals in 1992 and 1994 were associated with the large nesting colony of Common Terns (*S. hirundo*) and other species at Ocean City. Since Roseate Terns have sporadically nested in the Mid-Atlantic region (Clapp et al. 1983), a breeding attempt at the Ocean City colony is possible. However, most Roseate Terns in the United States breed in colonies in New England and the Florida Keys (AOU 1983).

**BRIDLED TERN *Sterna anaethetus***

Atlantic Ocean east of Ocean City, 7 June 1986 (DC, WK, \*MO, MB et al.; 87-10).

Bridled Terns are rather common summer and fall visitors to the warm offshore waters of North Carolina, becoming most numerous during August and September (Lee and Booth 1979, Lee 1986, 1995). Only small numbers of these terns have been reported farther north, primarily reflecting the paucity of pelagic birding trips taken from the Mid-Atlantic states during the months when they are most likely to appear. Bridled Terns are most frequently found along the inner edge of the Gulf Stream and where warm Gulf Stream eddies meet the continental shelf (Lee 1995), conditions that occur annually in Maryland's offshore waters. Hence, the committee no longer reviews pelagic reports of this species.

The June date was relatively early for the appearance of two Bridled Terns. However, this species has been reported as early as 17 April off North Carolina (Lee 1995).

**SOOTY TERN *Sterna fuscata***

Plum Point, CLVT, 6 September 1979 (\*JF et al.; 95-10).

As is true for most inland records of Sooty Terns, the capture of this individual along Chesapeake Bay followed the passage of a strong tropical storm.

**GUILLEMOT sp. *Cephus* sp.**

Chesapeake Bay near the Bay Bridge, ANAR, 11 March 1993 (JWh et al.; 94-03).

The committee took a conservative stance on this record. While the written description suggested that a guillemot was present at this location, this description did not provide adequate information on the coloration of the underwing coverts and the features of the white patch on the upper wing coverts to positively distinguish between the two very similar species of guillemots. Black Guillemot (*C. grylle*) is the more likely species to appear in Maryland based on geographic probability and the fact that Pigeon Guillemot (*C. columba*) is unknown as a vagrant away from the Pacific coast. However, the appearance of any alcid on this portion of Chesapeake Bay is exceptional, and the committee decided not to accept a specific identification based solely on geographic probability.

**[ATLANTIC PUFFIN *Fratercula arctica*]**

Atlantic Ocean east of Ocean City, 16 March 1975 (\*RR et al.; 9007).

The first documented record for Maryland, but subsequent pelagic trips have shown this species to be a fairly regular winter visitor far offshore.

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE *Zenaida asiatica***

Patuxent Naval Air Station, STMA, 4 November, 1988 (\*KR, MBr; 9503); Appleton, CECL, 9-27 March 1989 (PO, MO, \*PB et al.; 90-11).



**White-winged Dove (90-11), photos by Paul Bystrak**

As a vagrant in eastern North America, most records of Whitewing Doves are during June-August and late October-November. Hence, the record from Appleton was unexpected during spring. Reports of vagrant White-winged Doves have increased during recent years, especially in New England and the Maritime Provinces of Canada (Veit and Petersen 1993), although smaller numbers have appeared in the Mid-Atlantic states. Whether or not these vagrants represent wandering individuals from the southwestern United States or from the recently established population in Florida is unknown.

#### BURROWING OWL *Athene cunicularia*

Gortner, GARR, 18-20 May 1983 (\*FP et al.; 85-20).

Wandering Burrowing Owls have been widely reported from eastern North America (AOU 1983), although the number of reports has declined during recent decades. They are most likely to appear during the spring and fall migrations, perhaps indicating these vagrants originated from the highly migratory populations in western North America. However, the racial identities of most of these vagrants are unknown, and some may have come from the resident population in Florida.

#### RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD *Selasphorus rufus*

Lilypons, FRDK, 1 May 1971 (RRo; 90-13); Takoma Park, PGEO 9 November 1988—17 April 1989 (KK, HM, \*TO, \*MO, \*DC, DGr et al.; 90-14).

This species is the most widely reported western hummingbird in eastern North America. Its status in the east was originally summarized by Conway and Drennan (1979), and subsequent reports have firmly established Rufous Hummingbird as a rare but regular vagrant. An increase in the popularity of hummingbird feeders, and the practice of keeping them full into late autumn may contribute to the increased numbers of reports in recent years.

While adults have appeared as early as July and August, most records pertain to individuals discovered during November and December. In the Mid-Atlantic states, most Rufous Hummingbirds disappear during the winter, probably succumbing from the effects of severe weather. The Takoma Park hummingbird is one of very few to have overwintered in the Mid-Atlantic states, although wintering records are not unusual farther south. The May record from Lilypons is exceptional, providing one of very few reports of a spring migrant from eastern North America. In addition to these two records, additional reports of Rufous Hummingbirds and unidentified *Selasphorus* hummingbirds are under review by the committee. Observers are encouraged to submit all reports of *Selasphorus* hummingbirds, even if they cannot obtain the necessary information to specifically identify these individuals.

Other than adult males, distinguishing between Rufous and Allen's (*S. sasin*) hummingbirds poses one of the most difficult field identification challenges of all North American birds. In fact, most adult females and immatures cannot be positively identified in the field, although they can be separated in the hand (Stiles 1972). Even though Rufous is the more likely species to appear in Maryland, there have been a few confirmed records of Allen's in eastern North America. Hence, the committee is not willing to assume that all vagrant *Selasphorus* hummingbirds in the east are Rufous, and requires sufficient information to positively identify these individuals.

**HAMMOND'S FLYCATCHER** *Empidonax hammondi*  
Ocean City, WORC, 9 October 1963 (+DG; 89-09).

This museum specimen was originally identified as a Least Flycatcher (*E. minimus*), but was subsequently re-identified as a Hammond's Flycatcher (Gibson 1987). The record is one of a handful of confirmed reports of Hammond's Flycatcher from eastern North America. However, given the notoriously difficult problems in the field identification of *Empidonax* flycatchers during autumn (Whitney and Kaufman 1985), especially confirming the identities of extralimital individuals, its true vagrant status in the east remains to be determined.

**VERMILION FLYCATCHER** *Pyrocephalus rubinus*  
Assateague Island, WORC, 29 September 1991 (\*DC, MAT et al.; 9228).

Vermilion Flycatchers are known to wander widely from their established range in the southwestern United States and Mexico, but there are relatively few reports from along the Atlantic Coast. Most vagrants are detected during spring or fall migration, but one has overwintered on the Eastern Shore of Virginia in recent years.

**ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER** *Myiarchus cinerascens*  
Blackwater NWR, DORC, 4-5 December 1992 (\*OJ, HM, \*DC, et al.; 9309).

In eastern North America, the Ash-throated Flycatcher is a rare but fairly regular vagrant within the Atlantic coastal states, primarily as a late fall vagrant between late October and December (Murphy 1982). This record fits a well-established pattern of vagrancy.

**WESTERN KINGBIRD** *Tyrannus verticalis*  
McKee-Beshers WMA, MONT, 1 July 1979 (DC, RP; 83-29); Berlin, WORC, 28 December 1985 (MO; 91-17).

Because Western Kingbirds are generally known as rare fall migrants in eastern North America, the summer record from McKeeBeshers WMA was unexpected and one of very few to appear during that season in the Mid-Atlantic states. The kingbird at Berlin was fairly late, although there are other early winter reports from the region.

**GRAY KINGBIRD** *Tyrannus dominicensis*  
Girdletree, WORC, 14 June 1975 (\*DH et al.; 95-21); Arnold, ANAR, 3 May 1983 (\*GV, SV; 95-22).

Vagrant Gray Kingbirds have been discovered at a number of locations in the Atlantic coastal states and provinces, especially during late summer and autumn although spring records are not unprecedented. The Arnold kingbird was not accepted initially by the committee. However, a re-examination of the photo clearly shows a kingbird with white underparts and a forked tail, a combination of traits eliminating all other kingbirds except for the Giant (*T. cubensis*) (Phillips 1994). The latter species was eliminated by its much larger bill and head, as well as the fact that it is a non-migratory endemic to Cuba that has never wandered to the United States and is very unlikely to ever appear in Maryland.

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER *Tyrannus forficatus*

Bailey's Neck, TLBT, 2 June 1963 (DO et al.; 86-24); Blackwater NWR, DORC, 16 May 1984 (BR et al.; 87-26); Antietam National Battlefield, WASH, 3-18 October 1987 (\*DC, \*GJ, LG et al.; 88-06) Lilypons, FRDK, 30-31 May 1988 (\*MO, HM, EW et al.; 91-08).

This flycatcher regularly wanders from its established breeding range in the central United States. Most Scissor-tailed Flycatchers are discovered during late spring and early summer; the May and June dates from Maryland are typical of these records. However, the October record is not completely unexpected, since this species is known to be a fairly late fall migrant to its winter range in Florida (Duncan 1995).



**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (88-06), Photo by David Czaplak**

FORK-TAILED FLYCATCHER *Tyrannus savana*

Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 23 September 1978 (HW et al.; 83-05).

In North America, most Fork-tailed Flycatchers are observed during July-November within the eastern states, a pattern of vagrancy that is shown by the record from Sandy Point State Park. However, a few have also appeared during late spring. These individuals are believed to be mis-directed migrants of the race *T. s. savana*, that mistakenly migrate north from their winter range in northern South America rather than south to their normal breeding range (McCaskie and Patten 1994, Monroe and Barron 1980).

BOREAL CHICKADEE *Parus hudsonicus*

Back River Sewage Plant, BALT, 9 December 1977—23 April 1978 (\*JS, \*RR et al.; 87-01).

The appearance of Boreal Chickadees south of their normal range is usually associated with large southward invasions of Black-capped Chickadees (*P. atricapillus*). When Boreal Chickadees do appear, they may overwinter.

ROCK WREN *Salpinctes obsoletus*

Assateague National Seashore, WORC, 11-14 October 1993 (\*MHo, ESc et al.; 94-29).

A widespread summer resident in western North America, vagrant Rock Wrens are most likely to appear in the eastern states during fall or winter. The Assateague Island wren fits this pattern of vagrancy, and provided one of relatively few reports from the MidAtlantic region.

[SEDGE WREN *Cistothorus platensis*]

Rockville, MONT, 19 August—1 September 1983 (\*MO et al.; 92-30).

An unusual nesting record from the Piedmont, as most breeding has been reported from the Coastal Plain.

NORTHERN WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Hog Island Marsh, CRLN, 11-13 September 1990 (\*MO et al.; 91-09).

Northern Wheatears are primarily known as rare but annual fall migrants in eastern North America, primarily in September. Many fewer have been reported during spring (Bruun 1980). Most reports are from New Jersey northward along or near the coast, although there have been a few records from the Great Lakes region and other inland locations during recent years. The bird at Hog Island Marsh fits this established pattern of vagrancy. It provided one of very few records from the Mid-Atlantic region.

MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD *Sialia currucoides*

Oldtown, ALGY, 23 December 1970 (JP; 85-24).

A highly migratory species in western North America, Mountain Bluebirds are primarily known as late fall and winter visitors east of the Mississippi River with scattered reports east to the Atlantic coast. Maryland's only record was one of the first of a growing number of sightings from eastern North America, and another occurrence within the state is overdue.

VARIED THRUSH *Ixoreus naevius*

Savage, HWRD, 11-15 December 1977 (JSO et al.; 94-25); Bethesda, MONT, 1 February 1987 (HAI, JPO; 87-11).

Several additional reports are currently under review. This occupant of forested habitats along the Pacific coast is well known as a rare but regular winter visitor to eastern North America (Keith 1968). Most are discovered at feeders, as were these two indi-

viduals in Maryland. Vagrant Varied Thrushes are more often reported from New England, the upper Great Lakes states, and southern Canada than from states to the south, perhaps reflecting their increased reliance on feeders in the harsher northern climates.

**BOHEMIAN WAXWING** *Bombycilla garrulus*

Berlin, WORC, 13-15 February 1994 (MHo, PO, \*GJ et al.; 94-28).

While Bohemian Waxwings appear in varying numbers in portions of eastern Canada and northern New England each year, they seldom wander farther south except during years when they are very plentiful. This record of a single bird from Maryland is one of very few reports from the mid-Atlantic region.

**NORTHERN SHRIKE** *Lanius excubitor*

Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, PGEO, 3 January—7 February 1988 (\*KK et al.; 90-15); Schooley Mill Park, HWRD, 5 January—28 February 1991 (NM, BOT, MC et al.; 91-25); Lilypons, FRDK, 20 January—8 March 1991 (\*DC, MO, RH et al.; 91-26).

Typical wintering records for this rare visitor from Canada. The number of Northern Shrikes moving southward varies considerably from winter to winter. Their appearance in Maryland is most likely during years when relatively large numbers move into the northern United States such as the winter of 1990-1991. While this species has been reported with some regularity within the past eight years, there were very few reports between 1970 and the mid-1980s.

While the field identification of immature Northern Shrikes should not cause too much trouble given reasonable viewing conditions, adults can exhibit more variation than indicated in most field guides (Zimmerman 1955). Many characteristics can be similar to those of Loggerhead Shrikes (*L. ludovicianus*); hence, identifications should be based on careful descriptions of the entire bird and not one or two field marks. Special attention should be paid to the face patterns and bill shapes of problematic individuals.

**BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER** *Dendroica nigrescens*

Easton, TLBT, 30 September 1994 (\*JS; 95-01).

Along the Atlantic coast, this visitor from western North America has been most frequently discovered during late autumn and early winter. This individual was clearly a fall migrant.

**SWAINSON'S WARBLER** *Lymnothlypis swainsonii*

St. Timothy's School, BALT, 24-28 May 1983 (\*BRo, RR, MRe et al.; 86-29); Phoenix, BALT, 3 May—12 July 1987 (\*HK, #SS et al.; 8814).

While small numbers of Swainson's Warblers occur along the Pocomoke River drainage during most years, this species is seldom encountered elsewhere in Maryland. These extralimital birds are most likely to appear during spring, but may establish territories such as the Phoenix individual.

LAZULI BUNTING *Passerina amoena*

Timonium, BALT, 1 February—19 April 1963 (MGa, \*JRa et al.; 95-23).

One of very few confirmed records of Lazuli Bunting from eastern North America. This species will hybridize with Indigo Buntings (*P. cyanea*) where their ranges overlap on the Great Plains (Sibley and Short 1959), so any claims of extralimital Lazuli Buntings require sufficient documentation to eliminate these hybrids from consideration.

PAINTED BUNTING *Passerina ciris*

Stockton, WORC, 29 December 1991—19 April 1992 (MHo, RH et al.; 93-07); Beltsville, PGEO, 28 November—2 December 1992 (\*TWi, HWa et al.; 93-08).

A number of additional reports are currently under review by the committee. Along the Atlantic coast, vagrant Painted Buntings are most likely to appear during late November or December, and may overwinter. These records are typical of this pattern of vagrancy. Most are discovered at feeders.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW *Spizella pallida*

Rockville, MONT, 19-21 October 1981 (\*MO; 85-13); Rockville, MONT, 9 October 1982 (\*MO; 91-10); Rockville, MONT, 9-17 May 1984 (MO, \*BA; 91-11); Stablers Church Road, BALT, 6-8 March 1985 (BD, HK et al.; 87-02); Rockville, MONT, 1-5 October 1985 (MO et al.; 91-12); Assateague Island, WORC, 14 September—4 October 1986 (JO, \*MO, RB et al.; 87-12); Assateague Island, WORC, 14 September 1986 (MO, JO et al.; 92-05); Rockville, MONT, 10 October 1987 (MO; 91-13); Assateague Island, WORC, 16 September 1990 (\*MO; 91-14).

Clay-colored Sparrows are rare but regular fall migrants along the Mid-Atlantic coast, especially between mid-September and late October. Small numbers have also been found with some regularity during winter in Worcester County. Spring reports remain exceptional. In addition to records along and near the coast, these sparrows have appeared with some regularity elsewhere on the Coastal Plain and Piedmont as fall migrants. The committee currently reviews reports only from locations west of the Piedmont.

LARK SPARROW *Chondestes grammacus*

Rouge Lagoon, North Branch, ALGY, 11 August 1979 (JP; 86-10); Denton, CRLN, 9 February 1986 (RB, HW et al.; 88-18); Denton, CRLN, 16 February 1986 (\*MO et al.; 90-01); Loch Raven Reservoir, BALT, 8-15 March 1986 (HK et al.; 87-27); Clarksville, HWRD, 12 October 1988 (MWa; 90-02); Rock Creek Park, DC, 4-6 October 1991 (\*OJ; DC011).

In the mid-Atlantic states, Lark Sparrows are rare but fairly regular fall migrants between mid-August and mid-October on the Coastal Plain and Piedmont. Winter records, such as the two at Denton in 1986 and the Loch Raven Reservoir bird, are exceptionally rare as are spring migrants. The committee no longer reviews reports from the Coastal Plain and Piedmont.

LE CONTE'S SPARROW *Ammodramus leconteii*  
Ocean City, WORC, 23 October 1977 (RRo et al.; 83-07).

As a result of its very secretive behavior, the true status of Le Conte's Sparrow in Maryland remains to be determined. This individual was apparently a fall migrant, as it was not subsequently relocated.

Its secretive behavior complicates the field identification of Le Conte's Sparrows, because observing the important field marks can be rather difficult. They are also fairly similar to several other *Ammodramus* sparrows, especially as immatures, so observers may have to be fairly persistent in order to view all of the important field marks. While most field guides depict the central crown stripe as entirely white, this stripe is actually ochre on the forecrown; this contrast on the central crown stripe is not found on other *Ammodramus* sparrows except Grasshopper.

SEASIDE SPARROW *Ammodramus maritimus*  
Anacostia Naval Air Station, DC 7 May 1988 (\*DC; DC002).

Unusual so far upstream along the Potomac River, and the first record for DC.

[LINCOLN'S SPARROW *Melospiza lincolnii*]  
Ocean City, WORC, 29 December 1987 (MO; 92-04).

An unusual winter occurrence for a species that is an uncommon migrant through Maryland.

[SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*]  
Skyesville, CARR, 17 December 1981 (BE; 83-09).

The first county record, but on a very typical date of occurrence.

[BOBOLINK *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*]  
Seneca, MONT, 22 December 1985 (MO; 92-14).

An exceptionally late date for a species that should have been south of the equator in South America during that season. This record is one of very few from anywhere in North America during the early winter.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*  
Columbia, HWRD, 28 January—8 February 1979 (JSO, \*MKr et al.; 9224); Fulton, HWRD, 9 November 1985 (MC; 87-03); Sunshine, MONT, 19 December 1985 (MC, DD; 87-04); Back River Neck, BALT, 31 March—1 April 1986 (CD, AE; 87-05); Chase, BALT, 14-17 February 1988 (RB, HK et al. 91-31); Rising Sun, CECL, 4 March 1989 (HF; 91-32); Assateague National Seashore, WORC, 19 September 1990 (JC et al.; 91-33); Blackwater NWR, DORC, 25 January 1992 (DMo; 92-10).

A rare but fairly regular visitor to the Mid-Atlantic region, Yellow-headed Blackbirds are most likely to be discovered during fall and winter. These records represent typical dates of occurrence. The committee no longer reviews reports from the Coastal Plain and Piedmont.

**BREWER'S BLACKBIRD *Euphagus cyanocephalus***

Back River Sewage Plant, BALT, 8 December 1979 (RB, JOr; 88-17); Shorter's Wharf, DORC, 28 February—10 March 1991 (\*MO, \*BA et al.; 92-11); Hog Island Marsh, CRLN, 2 April 1991 (MO; 92-12); Shorter's Wharf, DORC, 14 November 1991 (\*EW; 92-13).

Another rare but regular visitor to the Mid-Atlantic region, especially along the Coastal Plain. They are most likely to be discovered between November and March as represented by these dates of occurrence. The committee no longer reviews reports from the Coastal Plain and Piedmont.

**BULLOCK'S ORIOLE *Icterus bullockii***

Blackwater NWR, DORC, 25 Sept. 1994 (BP et al.; 95-25).

Bullock's Orioles are very rare but fairly regular vagrants to eastern North America, with the majority of reports from North Carolina southward in the southeastern U.S. They are most likely to be discovered during late fall and winter, primarily as visitors to feeders. This individual at Blackwater N.W.R. was clearly a fall migrant.

The identification of vagrant Bullock's Orioles is complicated by variation exhibited by Baltimore Orioles (*I. galbula*), especially some females which may show fairly extensive grayish bellies. Detailed descriptions of the upperparts, head pattern, and underpart coloration are important for claims of female Bullock's Orioles. Hybrids between these two species are regularly reported from the Great Plains (Sibley and Short 1964), and further complicate the field identification of extralimital individuals.

**IDENTIFICATION ACCEPTED, NATURAL OCCURRENCE QUESTIONABLE**

Based on the information provided to the committee, the identification of the following records was judged to be correct. The committee felt, however, that their escape from captivity was the most likely explanation for their appearance in the area rather than a natural origin.

**FALCATED TEAL *Anas falcata***

Laytonsville, MONT, 2-16 March 1991 (RH; 94-21).

This teal breeds in eastern Siberia and winters from Japan and Korea to India. While reports from the Aleutian Islands and other locations in western Alaska probably pertain to vagrants from Asia (AOU 1983), reports from elsewhere in North America are generally believed to be escapes, especially those appearing in the eastern states. Additionally, Falcated Teal are commonly kept in captivity, providing a source for the stray individuals that have been occasionally encountered in eastern North America.

**BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis***

Fruitland, WICO, 13 October 1986 (RR; 88-24).

While these geese normally breed in Greenland and winter in northern Europe, their status as potential vagrants to North America has been the subject of considerable debate. Because Barnacle Geese are long-distance migrants, there is a possibility that stray individuals could join flocks of Brant (*B. bernicla*) in Greenland and migrate with

them to North America, or they may not be associated with any other species. Ryff (1984) summarized the argument against natural vagrancy to North America, based primarily on the large numbers of Barnacle Geese kept in captivity on this continent and the likelihood that escapes are responsible for many of the reports. At this time, the committee has not formally endorsed either side of this debate, and will consider the merits of each report as it is submitted. The circumstances of this report suggested that the probability it was a natural vagrant seemed less likely than an origin as an escape.

**PRAIRIE FALCON** *Falco mexicanus*

Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary, ANAR, 14 February 1994 (CS; 94-27).

In recent years, very small numbers of wintering Prairie Falcons have been discovered east of their normal range, appearing as far east as Illinois and western Kentucky. However, vagrant Prairie Falcons are almost unknown east of the Appalachian Mountains. In the absence of a defined pattern of vagrancy in the east, the fact that a Prairie Falcon had been reported as lost by a local falconer during the previous summer cast doubts upon the potential origins of this individual.

**SANDHILL CRANE** *Grus canadensis*

Poolesville, MONT, 25 May 1988—16 December 1990 (HM, \*DC, \*BDa, EW, MAT et al.; 91-15).

This record generated considerable debate within the committee. None of the potential local sources of captive birds had lost any cranes, but escapes do not necessarily come from the local area. The bird's overall tame behavior, close association with domestic livestock in a small area, and the fact that it did not migrate for a period in excess of 2.5 years suggested that its origins were probably not natural.

**BLACK-TAILED GULL** *Larus crassirostris*

Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 4-7 July 1984 (JO, \*CW, MO, HM et al.; 85-16).

At the time of the discovery of this individual, vagrant Black-tailed Gulls were unknown in North America outside of Alaska except for a single report from southern California that was believed to be "ship-assisted." During subsequent years, the only additional extralimital sightings outside of Alaska have been two reports from the Atlantic coast in 1995. In the absence of a defined pattern of vagrancy, the origins of these eastern North American records remain the subject of considerable speculation and debate.

The arguments for accepting the Maryland report (O'Brien 1986) as a vagrant largely center on the fact that other Siberian longdistance migrants have proven to be rare but somewhat regular vagrants in portions of eastern North America, most notably the Slaty-backed Gull (*L. schistisagus*). Additionally, the Maryland gull appeared following a winter when a number of vagrant birds from Siberia were detected in eastern North America. The arguments against accepting this report as a wild bird are based on the fact that the bird was discovered during mid-summer, not during the winter when most other Siberian vagrants have been detected. Unlike other Siberian vagrants, there are no records of vagrant Black-tailed Gulls from the interior of North America or the Pacific coast, so there is no clear picture of movements across the continent. Additionally, gulls are notorious for their ability to "ride ships" for considerable distances, and the fact that this individual appeared near very busy international shipping lanes may not be a coincidence.

At the time, the committee felt the most reasonable treatment was as a bird of questionable origin. However, the California report has been recently reviewed again and accepted as a naturally occurring vagrant (Heindel and Patten 1996). As the pattern of vagrancy for Black-tailed Gulls in North America becomes better established, then this report may require additional review.

## REPORTS NOT ACCEPTED

This list contains all reports that to date have completed review, but have not been accepted by the committee. In the vast majority of these cases, the reports were not accepted because the evidence provided to the committee did not convince the members that the identifications were conclusively established. In only a very few cases was it felt that an identification was incorrect.

**Pacific/Arctic Loon** (*Gavia pacifica/G. arctica*) Ocean City, WORC, 10 January 1971 (83-16); Potomac River at Ft. Washington, PGEO, 27 October 1983 (85-21). **Eared Grebe** (*Podiceps nigricollis*) North Beach, CLVT, 28 April 1983 (86-14); Chesapeake Beach, CLVT, 28 March 1991 (92-07); Bay Ridge, ANAR, 22 March 1992 (92-21); South River, ANAR, 25 March 1992 (92-22). **Black-capped Petrel** (*Pterodroma hasitata*) Atlantic Ocean east of Ocean City, 14 June 1980 (83-17). **Wilson's Storm-Petrel** (*Oceanites oceanicus*) Chesapeake Bay off WICO, 15 July 1991 (92-15). **Great Cormorant** (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) Seneca, MONT, 11 May 1991 (91-21). **Anhinga** (Anhinga anhinga) Ferry Neck, TLET, 2 September 1978 (83-06); Big Mill Pond, WORC, 22 May 1988 (89-05). **Magnificent Frigatebird** (*Fregata magnificens*) Assawoman Bay, WORC, 12 May 1978 (86-21).

**Greater Flamingo** (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) Assateague Island, WORC, 8 August—3 September 1972 (87-13). **Wood Stork** (*Mycteria americana*) Barnesville, MONT, 28 August 1987 (87-37). **Fulvous Whistling-Duck** (*Dendrocygna bicolor*) Hughes Hollow, MONT, 29 August 1991 (92-33). **"Bewick's" Tundra Swan** (*Cygnus columbianus bewickii*) West Ocean City, WORC, 13-20 February 1982 (88-11). **Whooper Swan** (*Cygnus cygnus*) Greensboro, CRLN, 11 December 1983 (85-18). **Common Eider** (*Somateria mollissima*) Pt. Lookout, STMA, 7 October 1978 (8304). **Barrow's Goldeneye** (*Bucephala islandica*) Ocean City, WORC, 10 April 1971 (85-07); Chester River, KENT, 16 December 1979 (83-13); Pt. Lookout State Park, STMA, 13 March 1983 (85-05); Patuxent River, CLVT, 27 March 1984 (85-09).

**Swallow-tailed Kite** (*Elanoides forficatus*) Jacksonville, BALT, 1 June 1979 (86-07). **White-tailed Kite** (*Elanus caeruleus*) Town Hill, ALGY, 26 October 1990 (91-29). **Mississippi Kite** (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) Owings Mills, BALT, 24 June 1978 (83-14); Wittman, TLBT, 9 July 1982 (83-15); Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, PGEO, 3 June 1987 (87-30); Lanham, PGEO, 27 June 1987 (8731); Ft. Smallwood Park, ANAR, 28 April 1990 (91-23). **Broad-winged Hawk** (*Buteo platypterus*) West Ocean City, WORC, 29 December 1986 (87-20). **Swainson's Hawk** (*Buteo swainsoni*) Elkton, CECL, 11 November 1982 (83-27); Washington Monument State Park, FRDK, 24 October 1989 (90-16); Ft. Smallwood Park, ANAR, 28 April 1990 (9302); Hancock, WASH, 4 November 1991 (93-03); Laytonsville, MONT, 14 March 1992 (93-04).

**Yellow Rail** (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*) Ft. McHenry Natl. Mon., BALT, 5 September 1981 (83-11). **Caribbean Coot** (*Fulica caribaea*) Hughes Hollow, MONT, 11 May 1984 (87-21). **Sandhill Crane** (*Grus canadensis*) Annapolis, ANAR, 24 February 1987 (87-32). **Piping Plover** (*Charadrius melanodus*) Triadelphia Reservoir, HWRD,

27 August 1986 (88-02). **Common Redshank** (*Tringa totanus*) Worton, KENT, 17 May 1981 (85-08). **Spotted Redshank** (*Tringa erythropus*) Chesapeake Beach, CLVT, 7 November 1981 (83-12). **Little Stint** (*Calidris minuta*) Horsehead Farm Sanctuary, QUAN, 19 October 1982 (85-04). **Curlew Sandpiper** (*Calidris ferruginea*) West Ocean City, WORC, 2 May 1959 (83-18); Blackwater NWR, DORC, 19 November 1976 (83-19); Ocean City, WORC, 15 October 1977 (83-20); North Beach, CLVT, 28 March 1987 (88-12). **Long-billed Dowitcher** (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) Rouge Lagoon, North Branch, ALGY, 21 July 1979 (8506). **Red Phalarope** (*Phalaropus fulicaria*) Great Falls, MONT, 12 March 1989 (90-04).

**Long-tailed Jaeger** (*Stercorarius longicaudus*) Assateague Island, WORC, 16 November 1982 (85-02); Atlantic Ocean off Ocean City, 6 October 1990 (92-26). **Great Skua** (*Catharacta skua*) Chesapeake Beach, CLVT, 13 November 1983 (86-23). **Franklin's Gull** (*Larus pipixcan*) Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 18-30 May 1976 (9401, 94-02); Loch Raven Reservoir, BALT, 27 October 1985 (88-08). **Mew Gull** (*Larus canus*) Back River Sewage Plant, BALT, 3 January 1978 (87-06); Back River Sewage Plant, BALT, 16 December 1979 (8707). **California Gull** (*Larus californicus*) Back River Sewage Treatment Plant, BALT, 18 March 1978 (83-22); Cabin Branch, Curtis Bay, BALT, 4 March 1980 (83-23); Back River, BALT, 26 October 1980 (83-24); Pleasure Island, BALT, 10 May 1981 (83-25). **Yellow-legged Gull** (*Larus cachinnans*) Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 13 September 1990 (91-01). **Sabine's Gull** (*Xema sabini*) Assateague Island, WORC, 28 May 1973 (86-16).

**Roseate Tern** (*Sterna dougallii*) Back River, BALT, 12 April 1977 (85-25). **Arctic Tern** (*Sterna paradisaea*) Assateague Island, WORC, 28 May 1973 (86-19); Fourth Street Flats, Ocean City, WORC, 28 April 1991 (93-06). **Bridled Tern** (*Sterna anaethetus*) Ocean City, WORC, 18 August 1986 (88-13). **Black Guillemot** (*Cephus grylle*) Assateague Island, WORC, 28 December 1989 (90-17). **Common Ground-Dove** (*Columbina passerina*) Bel Air, HARF, 18 September 1978 (85-01). **Lesser Nighthawk** (*Chordeiles acutipennis*) Plum Point, CLVT, 3 December 1974 (83-26); Memorial Stadium, Baltimore, BALT, 11 October 1979 (86-01). **Rufous Hummingbird** (*Selasphorus rufus*) Emmitsburg, FRDK, 8 November 1952 (90-12). **Red-breasted Sapsucker** (*Sphyrapicus ruber*) Pocomoke River State Park, WORC, 8 April 1974 (85-23). **Red-cockaded Woodpecker** (*Picoides borealis*) Battle Creek Cypress Swamp, CLVT, 18 August 1979 (86-02); Pt. Lookout State Park, STMA, 22 June 1984 (89-03); Waldorf, CHAS, 22 December 1989 (90-18).

**Western Wood-Pewee** (*Contopus sordidulus*) Damsite, KENT, 20 September 1980 (85-03). **Vermilion Flycatcher** (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) Elk Neck State Park, CECL, 3 October 1981 (86-03). **Western Kingbird** (*Tyrannus verticalis*) Pennyfield Lock, C & O Canal, MONT, 21 August 1990 (91-18). **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** (*Tyrannus forficatus*) Elkton, CECL, 28 May 1982 (83-28); Savage, HWRD, 10 November 1989 (91-19). **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** (*Regulus calendula*) Athol Road, Farrington Neck, WICO, 13 July 1980 (86-25). **Northern Wheatear** (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) McDonogh School, BALT, 15 October 1985 (86-30). **Varied Thrush** (*Ixoreus naevius*) Wheaton, MONT, 7 May 1989 (90-03). **Sprague's Pipit** (*Anthus spragueii*) New Design Road, FRDK, 9 May 1985 (86-09); Lilypons, FRDK, 15-17 March 1992 (92-31). **Northern Shrike** (*Lanius excubitor*) Marriottsville, HWRD, 26 January 1991 (92-19).

**Bell's Vireo** (*Vireo bellii*) Assateague Island, WORC, 8 September 1956 (87-16); Elliott Island, DORC, 30 April 1982 (8717). **Townsend's Warbler** (*Dendroica townse-*

*di*) Cockeysville, BALT, 30 April 1983 (86-04). **Black-headed Grosbeak** (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*) Fulton, HWRD, 17 October 1982 (86-05). **Indigo Bunting** (*Passerina cyanea*) Whaleyville, WICO, 29 January 1989 (8910). **Le Conte's Sparrow** (*Ammodramus lecontei*) Antietam National Battlefield, WASH, 26 April 1980 (83-08). **Harris' Sparrow** (*Zonotrichia querula*) Nassawango Iron Furnace, WORC, 4 February 1989 (90-20). "Oregon" **Dark-eyed Junco** (*Junco hyemalis oreganus*) Baltimore, BALT, 28 March 1980. **Chestnut-collared Longspur** (*Calcarius ornatus*) Sandy Point State Park, ANAR, 30-31 October 1970 (83-30). **Yellow-headed Blackbird** (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) Blackwater NWR, DORC, 13 August 1988 (92-08); Triadelphia Reservoir, HWRD, 20 October 1991. **Bronzed Cowbird** (*Molothrus aeneus*) Ft. Meade, ANAR, 24 February 1994. **Bullock's Oriole** (*Icterus bullockii*) Blackwalnut Point, TLBT, 6 December 1987 (88-16). **Pine Grosbeak** (*Pinicola enucleator*) Timonium, BALT, 2 November 1983 (85-10).

Additional comments are provided for some of the "Not Accepted" reports listed above. These comments include some information on patterns of vagrancy as an indication of when these species might be expected to appear in the Maryland/DC area. Identification information is also provided for some species to emphasize the level of information that may be needed to adequately document their occurrence in the area and the references relevant to the review. However, this information is not meant to specifically criticize the materials submitted for any of the "Not Accepted" reports.

**Pacific/Arctic Loon:** The Maryland records were submitted prior to the split of Arctic Loon into the Pacific (*Gavia pacifica*) and Arctic (*G. arctica*) species. To date, the few documented records of this species group from the Atlantic coast have all pertained to Pacific Loons, although Arctic Loons are considered to be potential vagrants from Europe. Any claim of Pacific Loon from Maryland should carefully eliminate all similar species. While the distinctions between Pacific and Common loons are treated in the recent field guides, separating Pacific from Arctic loons requires attention to the field marks discussed by McCaskie et al. (1990), Roberson (1989), Schulenberg (1989), and Walsh (1988).

**Black-capped Petrel:** This species is a common visitor to the Gulf Stream off North Carolina, most numerous during May, August and December-January (Lee 1986, 1995). While relatively few have been reported north of North Carolina, the documentation of its occurrence in Maryland waters is expected.

**Greater Flamingo:** Observers should not assume that any flamingo is automatically this species. Other species of flamingos are regularly kept in captivity, and could occur as escapes in this area. Hence, detailed descriptions of these individuals are important, placing emphasis on leg color and the extent of pink on the body.

This individual appeared shortly after the passage of a tropical storm. This timing, the bird's wild behavior, and its bright pink coloration were believed to indicate a possible wild origin for this flamingo. However, sufficient information to positively establish its identity was not provided. Even if the identification were correct, this species is commonly kept in captivity and fairly regularly escapes. The committee believed that its escape from captivity was a likely explanation for its appearance so far from its normal range.

**"Bewick's" Tundra Swan:** The extent of yellow on the bills of "Bewick's" Swans and Tundra Swans (*Cygnus c. columbianus*) is more variable than indicated in the field guides, and individuals of both races can appear quite similar in the field (Evans and

Sladen 1980). These races hybridize in portions of their range, and intermediate individuals further complicate extralimital claims of either race. Any claims of "Bewick's" Swans from Maryland should be accompanied by detailed descriptions of the pattern of yellow on the bill, and hopefully some photographs.

**Whooper Swan:** While the photographs accompanying this record strongly suggested this species, a review of these photos by outside experts concluded that they did not completely eliminate "Bewick's" Tundra Swan from consideration. Even if the identification were accepted, the origins were questioned by most committee members. Vagrant Whooper Swans are virtually unknown from eastern North America, while this species is regularly kept in captivity and escapes have been reported on several occasions.

**Barrow's Goldeneye:** Except for adult males in alternate plumage, the field identification of Common (*Bucephala clangula*) and Barrow's goldeneyes poses considerable challenges. Immature males are troublesome, as head shape and shape of the facial crescent of young Commons can appear very similar to a Barrow's Goldeneye. Females are equally troublesome, as Commons with extensively yellow bills have been encountered in the field. Additionally, hybrids between the two species have been reported but apparently are fairly rare (Martin and DiLabio 1994), further complicating extralimital claims of Barrow's Goldeneyes. All claims of extralimital Barrow's Goldeneyes should include detailed descriptions of the extent of white on the upper wing coverts, the only characteristic that may conclusively establish the identities of some individuals (Carney 1983).

**Caribbean Coot:** American Coots (*Fulica americana*) can exhibit considerable variation in the size and shape of their frontal shields (Gullion 1951), and some males can appear very similar to Caribbean Coots. All reports of "Caribbean Coots" from the United States are currently believed to be American Coots with extremely large frontal shields (Clark 1985, Roberson and Baptista 1988).

**Mew Gull:** Reports of Mew Gulls from the Atlantic coast include individuals of the Common Gull (*Larus c. canus*), vagrants from Europe, and the Mew Gull (*L. c. brachyrhynchos*) which occurs in western North America. Claims of this species in Maryland should be sufficiently detailed to establish which race is involved, which may require very careful attention to the wing-tip pattern and other subtle characteristics. Grant (1986) remains the standard reference for identification information on these races, although additional information is provided by Lauro and Spencer (1980) and Tove (1993).

**Arctic Tern:** Despite the fact that the identification of this species is fairly well covered in the standard field guides, convincing descriptions have been difficult to obtain for the Maryland reports. This problem results in part from the fact that most characteristics distinguishing Arctic Terns from Common Terns (*Sterna hirundo*) are subjective, and are most apparent when both species are available for direct comparison. Additionally, many characteristics may not be very apparent on flying birds briefly observed from a moving boat. All reports of Arctic Terns should include careful descriptions of the wing patterns (both above and below), although other field marks should not be ignored.

In the western North Atlantic, Arctic Terns are generally uncommon spring migrants from North Carolina northward, with most reports between mid-May and mid-June (Lee 1986). This passage is normally far offshore, frequently beyond the range of most pelagic birding trips. After the breeding season, Arctic Terns are believed to fly across the Atlantic Ocean and migrate south along the coasts of Europe and Africa (Cramp 1985). Hence, there are very few reports of fall migrants from the western North Atlantic south of the breeding range.

**Lesser Nighthawk:** There are very few confirmed records of this species in eastern North America outside of Florida, although its true vagrant status remains to be determined. Of the reports of lingering fall nighthawks in the east, those specifically identified have proven to be Commons (*Chordeiles minor*) (see Czaplak and Wilds 1986). However, many of these individuals have never been positively identified. The field identification of silent nighthawks poses a significant challenge, especially given the plumage variation exhibited by Common Nighthawks. Any claims of Lesser Nighthawk from Maryland should be accompanied by detailed descriptions of the entire plumage, emphasizing the characteristics discussed in Czaplak and Wilds (1986).

**Red-breasted Sapsucker:** This species is largely non-migratory and unknown as a vagrant in central or eastern North America. The fact that the documentation was prepared more than a decade after the observation, as well as the absence of a defined pattern of vagrancy for this species, concerned the committee.

The identification of sapsuckers is complicated by the existence of hybrids between the various species. Hence, detailed descriptions prepared at the time of observation are essential to establish the identities of extralimital individuals. Sapsucker identification is discussed in detail by Devillers (1970), with additional information in Lehman (1991).

**Western Wood-Pewee:** Separating the wood-pewees poses a significant challenge, both in the field and in the hand. In fact, some specimens may not be positively identified based solely on physical characteristics (Rising and Schueler 1980). Claims of Western Wood-Pewees in the field should include detailed descriptions, and hopefully tape recordings of vocalizations, which are the best characteristics for distinguishing between the two species. In addition to the report mentioned above, several other reports of Western Wood-Pewee from Maryland await consideration by the committee.

**Sprague's Pipit:** There are very few confirmed records of vagrant Sprague's Pipits from eastern North America. Its field identification is described in detail by King (1981). This shy species has very specific habitat requirements, preferring upland fields with short but thick grassy cover. It would not be expected to occur in the more open wet habitats preferred by American Pipits (*Anthus rubescens*).

**Bell's Vireo:** Some White-eyed Vireos (*Vireo griseus*) can approach this species in appearance and some vocalizations, so any potential Bell's Vireo should be identified on the basis of all plumage, vocal, and structural characteristics.

**Black-headed Grosbeak:** While the identification of adult males should not be difficult under most circumstances, females and immatures pose a greater challenge. Variability in female Rosebreasted Grosbeaks (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) can be greater than depicted in most field guides (Morlan 1991), and some individuals can have rather buffy underparts with limited dark streaking. Some of this variation is related to age (Pyle et al. 1987). Additionally, the two species regularly hybridize (West 1962), and any aberrant individuals would have to be distinguished from potential hybrids.

**"Oregon" Dark-eyed Junco:** The hybridization occurring between the various races of this species greatly complicates the field identification of extralimital individuals. While typical adult male "Oregon" Juncos can be positively identified given good views, the identity of other age/sex classes is much more difficult to establish. All claims of this race should be accompanied by detailed descriptions in order to eliminate potential hybrids.

**Chestnut-collared Longspur:** The committee's review of this report was hampered by the loss of the original field notes of one of the observers. If anyone has original field notes for this bird, the committee would like to see them. Unfortunately, the call notes of this longspur were not heard, which would have simplified its identification. Fall immature longspurs are not thoroughly treated in most field guides, so their positive identification requires a detailed description of all field marks in addition to the tail pattern.

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Cover: Male Red-bellied Woodpecker at Waldorf, Maryland, April 1989. Photo by George M. Jett



## BREEDING BIOLOGY OF PEREGRINE FALCONS NESTING ON MARYLAND'S COASTAL PLAIN

GLENN D. THERRES

Historically, Peregrine Falcons (*Falco peregrinus*) in Maryland nested on cliffs in the mountains associated with the Potomac River and on the Piedmont along the Susquehanna River (Stewart and Robbins 1958). This species was never a common breeder in Maryland. Stewart and Robbins (1958) reported only ten nest sites known between 1932 through 1952. These sites were found in Allegany, Frederick, Harford, Montgomery and Washington counties. The eyrie at Maryland Heights across the Potomac River from Harper's Ferry was occupied in 1893, and perhaps as early as 1887 (Kirkwood 1895). It was still occupied in 1947 (Maryland Nest Records File).

The last pre-DDT recorded nesting by peregrines in Maryland was in 1952 (Stewart and Robbins 1958). The Peregrine Falcon disappeared as a breeding bird in the eastern United States by the mid 1960s (Hickey 1969). Reproductive failure as a result of contamination by organochlorine pesticides, such as DDT, led to the extirpation of this bird of prey (Peakall 1976).

Eastern Peregrine Falcon populations were re-established by releasing captively produced peregrines into the wild through a technique called hacking (Barclay and Cade 1983). In Maryland, peregrines were reintroduced beginning in 1975 and continued through 1984 (Therres et al. 1993). A total of 90 young peregrines were released in Maryland. Instead of hacking young falcons on cliff sites in Maryland and elsewhere in the mid Atlantic area, peregrine eyases were released at towers on the Coastal Plain. Peregrines were hacked in coastal areas to minimize predation by Great Horned Owls (*Bubo virginianus*) and to take advantage of the greater availability of prey (Barclay 1988).

The first natural nesting by reintroduced Peregrine Falcons in Maryland occurred in 1983. That year two pairs established territories: one on an Eastern Shore tower, the other on the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. Since then, peregrines have nested on Maryland's Coastal Plain every year and have increased to eight nesting pairs plus a few pairs holding territories but not nesting. This paper summarizes the breeding biology of this established Coastal Plain nesting population from 1983 through 1995.

### NEST SITES

All active nest sites on the Coastal Plain have been on artificial structures. Five have occurred on towers in salt marshes, two on bridges, and one on the U.S.F.& G. Building in Baltimore City. Counties with nesting peregrines included Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Dorchester, and Somerset.

The salt marsh towers were constructed of wood, and some served as hack sites during the reintroduction efforts. The towers ranged in height from 22 ft to 30 ft high. The dominant vegetation of these salt marshes was saltmarsh cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*) and saltmeadow cordgrass (*S. patens*). Atop each tower were two large nesting boxes, completely open on one side. Pea gravel was available on the bottom of each box to serve as nesting substrate. The peregrines utilized these boxes for nesting.

The two bridges used by nesting Peregrine Falcons were the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and the Francis Scott Key Bridge. The nest sites on each bridge occurred below the road surface, on the support piers on each side of the main channel. Nest boxes, similar to those on the salt marsh towers, were used on the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. One was available on a ledge on each of the concrete piers on either side of the main channel. The falcons have used both boxes over the years, though the box most frequently used was the one on the western pier. The nest site on the Key Bridge was in a steel structure that was part of the actual bridge design. The structure is 3 ft long and 2 ft high. There is an opening on two ends of the structure. Nesting substrate was primarily soot and dirt from the road above.

The nest site on the U.S.F. & G. Building was a specially designed scrape located on a ledge in the southwest corner of the 33rd floor. Pea gravel served as the nesting substrate in this scrape.

#### NESTING SEASON

The nesting season of Coastal Plain nesting Peregrine Falcons in Maryland extends from late February through July. Figure 1 summarizes the nesting chronology of peregrine nesting attempts from 1983 through 1995.

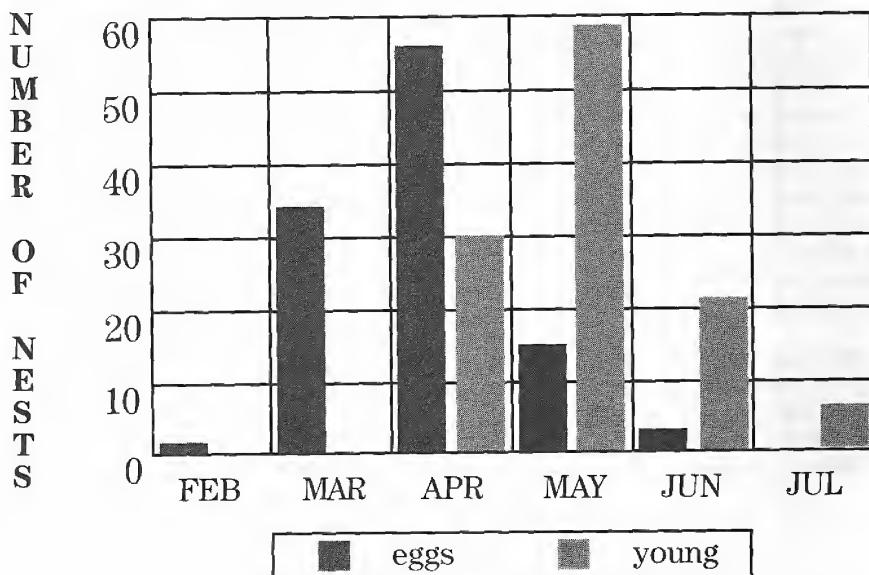


Figure 1. Number of Peregrine Falcon nests with eggs or young by month during the 1983-95 nesting seasons (n=67). Data based on known egg or young dates, then extrapolated to month of incubation or fledging.

The earliest recorded egg date was February 26. This was the first of a clutch of eggs laid in 1984 at the U.S.F.& G. Building. The majority of clutches were recorded in April, though the initiation of egg laying probably occurs in late March. The latest date eggs were recorded still being incubated was June 16. This occurred on a tower on Smith Island in 1992 by a first-year breeding pair. Most first-year nesting pairs were later in laying their clutches than more experienced birds. At the U.S.F.& G. Building a female replacing the territorial female, who died earlier in 1992, laid her first egg on May 4.

Most young hatch in April or early May and stay in the nest until late May or mid June. The earliest hatching date was April 6 at the U.S.F.& G. Building. The latest that young remained in a nest prior to fledging was July 29. That young was raised by the first-year nesting pair at Smith Island in 1992.

The only historic nesting data for cliff sites in Maryland was published by Wimsatt (1939, 1940). His data from the eyrie at Maryland Heights indicated that the nesting season in the mountains ranged from mid February to early June. Wimsatt (1940) estimated an early egg date of February 12, based on the age of young in the nest and back-dating. He reported most nests in the region did not have eggs until the end of March and early April. Wimsatt (1939) recorded the first egg laid in 1937 on April 2, with the clutch being completed on April 9.

## EGGS

The mean clutch size of 75 nesting attempts on the Coastal Plain was 3.37 eggs per nest. Clutch sizes ranged from one to five, with a clutch of four being most common ( $n=35$ ). Six clutches were of five eggs, 18 with three eggs, 13 with two eggs and three with only one. Some of these numbers are based on the number of young observed, not eggs, and may under-represent the full clutch size of some of these nests.

Hickey (1942) reported the mean clutch size of Peregrine Falcons nesting in the eastern United States pre-DDT as 3.72 eggs per nest. He reported the normal clutch size as four, with a range of two to seven. Actual clutch sizes of Maryland peregrines nesting on cliff sites during the first half of this century were not available.

On at least two occasions, two females laid eggs in the same nest in a given year. The first recorded incidence of this occurred in 1986 at a tower on Smith Island. That year two females laid a combined six eggs. They shared incubation duties, but the eggs disappeared prior to hatching. In 1994 at the U.S.F.& G. Building, an unknown female laid a single egg in the scrape prior to the territorial female laying her four eggs. The unknown female disappeared shortly after laying her egg.

## YOUNG

Of the 64 nests that hatched young, the mean brood size was 2.81 young per nest. The range in brood size was one to five. The most common brood size was two ( $n=25$ ). Only one brood had five young, 17 had four young, 18 had three, and three were single chick broods.

Survival of the young in the nest, prior to fledging, was high (95.5%). Of the 180 young that hatched, only eight died prior to reaching banding age. Only two complete broods were lost. One brood of three was lost to raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) predation; the other from unknown causes. Three young died after falling off or being blown off the U.S.F.& G. Building. The other young disappeared from their nests for unknown reasons. The mean number of young reaching banding age, and presumed fledged, was 2.73 ( $n=63$ ).

The mean number of young in the nests of eastern peregrines pre-DDT was 3.0 in the U.S. and 2.5 in eastern Canada (Hickey 1942). Both of the broods reported from Maryland Heights were of three young each (Wimsatt 1939, 1940).

The number of young raised per Coastal Plain nesting pair in Maryland exceeded that of Coastal Plain nesting peregrines in New Jersey (Steidl et al. 1991). The New Jersey falcons raised 2.24 young per successful nest compared to Maryland's 2.81.

### NESTING SUCCESS

From 1983 through 1995, the 79 nesting attempts by Peregrine Falcons on the Coastal Plain resulted in 64 successfully raising at least one young. This 81.0% success rate is much higher than the 61.7% reported from New Jersey's Coastal Plain nesting peregrines (Steidl et al. 1991). The lower success rate in New Jersey resulted in part from low productivity by peregrines nesting on bridges and buildings. Conversely, two of Maryland's most dependable nesters were the pairs on the Chesapeake Bay Bridge (92.3%, n=13) and the U.S.F.& G. Building (100%, n=12).

The only pair of peregrines in Maryland with a poor nesting record was the pair at the Key Bridge. In 10 years that pair successfully nested only once. Excluding the Key Bridge nesting attempts, all the other peregrines combined for a 91.3% success rate (n=69).

In summary, Peregrine Falcons nesting on Maryland's Coastal Plain are reproducing at normal levels. Clutch sizes averaged 3.37 eggs per nest, while brood sizes averaged 2.81 young per nest. These are similar to historical data from Maryland. The nesting season, which extends from late February through July, is comparable to that reported by Wimsatt (1939, 1940). Reintroduced peregrines have adapted well to nesting on the Coastal Plain in Maryland.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Monitoring of Peregrine Falcon nest sites in Maryland was conducted by numerous Department of Natural Resources personnel and others. J.C. Barber has monitored the birds at the U.S.F.& G. Building since they first nested. W. King, a bridge inspector for Greiner Engineering, counted eggs on the bridges. J.H. Barclay, M.J. Gilroy and J.D. Weaver of The Peregrine Fund assisted in monitoring and banded many of the young in the early years. C. Kopkie of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service banded the more recent young. Toll facilities personnel provided assistance in monitoring the bridge pairs. Funding for monitoring was provided from a variety of sources, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's endangered species funds, Maryland's Wildlife Management and Protection Funds and the Chesapeake Bay and Endangered Species Fund. J.C. Barber, C. Kopkie and S.A. Smith reviewed the manuscript.

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## **FREESTATE RACEWAY POND YIELDS BREEDING RAILS**

**JOANNE K. SOLEM AND NANCY C. MAGNUSSON**

On July 22, 1992, Eirik Blom observed what appeared to be a dike along the west side of U.S. Route 1, near the intersection with Gorman Road north of Laurel in Howard County, Maryland. Anticipating possible migrant shorebirds, he climbed the embankment. On the mudflats of a partially dry pond he found a Short-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus griseus*), and a Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Calidris pusilla*), along with an immature Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*). The embankment was not a dike holding water but instead was the east side of a harness track, the former Freestate Raceway. Inside the deteriorating oval track was the remnant of a several acre pond that had been the site of the only two recorded moorhen nestings in the county. When the track was sold for development, the fresh water intake pipe had been cut so that the pond became dependent upon rainfall.

Blom mentioned his find to Solem the evening of his discovery with the suggestion that it should be checked. The following evening, July 23, the authors went to the track about 5:30 p.m. despite the prediction of a late day thunderstorm. The pond was perhaps half filled with water with a few islands rising above the surface. A large portion of the southern and northeastern section was damp mud. Narrow-leaved cattails (*Typha angustifolia*) grew in large patches at various points along the perimeter.

On the southeastern mudflats three large black, obviously immature, Rallidae were visible. They still had a significant amount of down but appeared to have some contour feathers; in addition, at least two had a small amount of rust in the wing, at least two had some rust on the undertail coverts, while one had some white on the flanks. At least two had whitish chins and throats. They had almost no tails. Each had a sturdy dark bill that was not quite as long as the head.

At the southwest corner of the pond, Magnusson spotted another bird directly in front of a large group of cattails. Initially, we mistakenly thought it was an immature Virginia Rail; however, the bill was too short, and the barred flanks and overall buffy color were inconsistent with young Virginias. We soon realized it as an immature Sora (*Porzana carolina*). This was particularly exciting because it would constitute a new breeding record for Howard County. That day, we observed three, maybe four, immature Soras. None had black around the horn-colored bill. All were mostly buffy though one was beginning to show some gray. Although they were small rails, they were not tiny. They wandered in and out of the cattails, becoming visible on the small areas of emergent mud. During the 10 to 15 minutes we watched them, one flew about 25 feet.

The overcast thickened, the wind increased, and a storm seemed imminent; however, just before leaving, Magnusson scoped the pond edge one last time. In front of the cattails at the northeast corner of the pond, she observed yet another rail: an adult Virginia Rail (*Rallus limicola*), closely followed by a tiny black, downy chick that had a small grayish bill and gray legs. It was so small that it looked as though it could have walked beneath the adult. Both walked into the cattails and disappeared. At that point we left, just ahead of the storm.

On July 24, the authors with a group of seven people visited the pond at about 5:30 p.m. The day had been cloudy with intermittent thunderstorms that raised the water level in the pond, eliminating most of the mudflats. At least three (probably four) juvenile Soras were seen at the southwest corner; an adult Virginia Rail with a single tiny chick again was observed briefly along the north edge of the pond. As many as four immature Rallidae were also seen, again along the southeast mudflats. A Least (*Calidris minutilla*), a Pectoral (*C. melanotos*), and three Solitary Sandpipers (*Tringa solitaria*) were present with Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*).

Robert Ringler visited the site the same day and reported three juvenile Soras, one Pectoral Sandpiper, and one Great Egret (*Ardea alba*). He made a second visit on July 25 at which time he observed four large downy Rallidae and a Pectoral Sandpiper.

On July 26, Solem and Jane Farrell checked the pond in the late morning. The water was high; no rails were seen. In the late afternoon, Harvey and Marion Mudd stopped but saw no rails; a Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*) was present. Phillip and Barbara Davis visited the site that day in the evening and observed one juvenile Sora and an adult Virginia Rail.

On the evening of August 5, Solem and Farrell spent 1.5 hours at the pond without seeing any rails. The high water probably was a factor. A Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) perched at the top of an evergreen beyond the far side of the pond just as it was getting dark.

On August 8, Magnusson and Farrell visited the pond. They observed a juvenile Virginia Rail, which had grown to full size and had a full-length bill. It was mostly black

with a touch of barring on the flanks and dark rust undertail coverts. They also saw a juvenile Sora that was developing a browner cap and was turning grayer overall than those that had been seen a few weeks earlier.

Magnusson, Solem, and Farrell met at the track about 5:30 p.m. on August 18. The water level was still high. Two immature Virginia Rails moved about on the north side of the pond among clumps of sedges in front of the cattails. Both of these birds were nearly the size of adults although still dark slaty gray (one lighter than the other) with dark bills that were not fully elongated. Also in or over the pond were a female Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*), a female Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*), a Solitary Sandpiper, two Green Herons (*Butorides virescens*), two Bank Swallows (*Riparia riparia*), and nine Common Nighthawks (*Chordeiles minor*).

The same group of observers met at the pond at 5:45 a.m. on August 22. The only rail seen was a single immature Virginia whose dark bill was quite long. The bird seemed to be about the size of an adult. Also noted were one female Blue-winged Teal, two Common Nighthawks, two Laughing Gulls (*Larus atricilla*), two Great Blue Herons (*Ardea herodias*), two Green Herons, one Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*), and one Merlin (*Falco columbarius*).

On September 2, Magnusson, Farrell, Jo and Bob Solem visited the site at 5:30 p.m. The pond was being pumped dry before filling it prior to development of the property. A single adult Virginia Rail was seen. The extensive mud flats held two Solitary Sandpipers, two Lesser Yellowlegs, one Semipalmated Sandpiper, one Pectoral, and two Least Sandpipers, 14 Killdeer, and four Green Herons.

Solem made a final check in late September. At that time the pond had been drained and the shore vegetation had been bulldozed. Consultation in late summer with the Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning, the Howard Soil Conservation District, and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources indicated that permission to drain the pond and fill it had been given earlier in 1992 by the Army Corps of Engineers because the pond was a manmade structure. Such a decision is consistent with current wetland regulations.

Although this pond was less than a mile from the western edge of the Coastal Plain, the physiographic region in which most Maryland rails nest, breeding records on the Western Shore are few. Those recorded previously in Howard County can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

There are two Common Moorhen breeding records, both from the same Freestate Raceway pond when the track was still in use. A nest with eight eggs was discovered by Paul Leifer *et al.* on June 18, 1981 (Solem 1981). The moorhens did not return to nest the following year (Solem, pers. comm.). In 1983 Leifer reported the presence of a moorhen at the pond on June 12, but no evidence of nesting was found (Ringler 1983). Later in the summer, however, Leifer found four immature moorhens at the pond (Solem, pers. comm.). There were no subsequent reports for this species.

There is a single breeding record for a Virginia Rail in Howard County prior to the one described in this article. During the first Howard County Breeding Bird Atlas, Irving Hampe reported seeing one- or two-year-old Virginia Rails in a marshy area along the Howard County side of the Patapsco River (Relay-northwest) in 1974 (Klimkiewicz and Solem 1987). Later in the summer he observed juveniles on several occasions at the same location.

There are no previous reports of Soras breeding in Howard County. Of interest, however, is an article by Brooke Meanley (1980), which cites the records of breeding

Soras in Maryland. Two of the three (or possibly four) records were at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in the mid to late 1980's. The Center is located approximately 7.5 miles south of the Freestate Raceway site.

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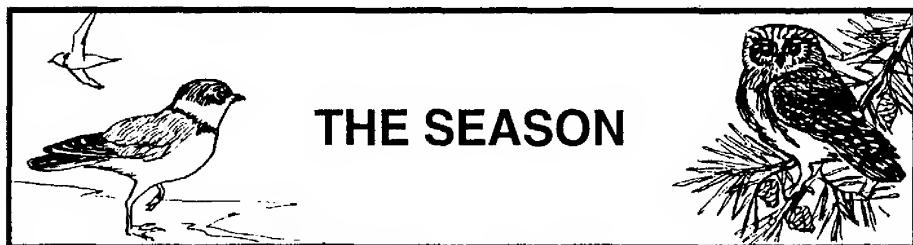
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## FALL MIGRATION, AUGUST 1 - NOVEMBER 30, 1994

**DANIEL R. SOUTHWORTH AND LINDA SOUTHWORTH**

There were no heavy frosts or particularly notable cold fronts, and precipitation was below normal. With the relatively mild weather, some migrants lingered. No large fallouts of passerines were noted but it was a good season for western wanderers. Numbers for creepers, nuthatches, and northern finches were poor.

*Observers:* Henry Armistead, Robert Behrstock, Anne Bishop, John Bjerke, Rick Blom, Connie Bockstie, Larry Bonham, Bob Boxwell, Carol and Don Broderick, Martha Chestem, Patty Craig, David Czaplak, Lynn Davidson, Bill Dobbins, Ethel Engle (reporting for Caroline County), Jane Farrell, Paul Fritz, Kevin Graff, Gary Griffith, Marvin Hewitt, Mark Hoffman, George Jett, Doug Lister, Nancy Magnusson, Dotty Mumford, Mariana Nuttle, Michael O'Brien, Peter Osenton, Bonnie Ott, Jim Paulus, Elizabeth Pitney (reporting for the Wicomico Bird Club), Fran Pope, Kyle Rambo, Jan Reese, Robert Ringler,

Barbara Ross, Gene Scarpulla, Stephen Simon, Jo Solem (reporting for Howard County), Connie Skipper, Dan and Linda Southworth, Jim Stasz, Mary Ann Todd, Charles and Gail Vaughn, David Walbeck, Mark Wallace, Robert Warfield, Dave Webb, David Weesner, Joy Wheeler, Hal Wierenga, Jim Wilkinson, Erika Wilson, Helen Zeichner.

Banding was conducted this fall at Cherry Creek by Fran Pope and Connie Skipper, and at Irvine Natural Science Center by Barbara Ross with assistance from several birders.

*Abbreviations:* DC - District of Columbia, NWR - National Wildlife Refuge, PRNAS - Patuxent River Naval Air Station (St. Mary's County), PWRC - Patuxent Wildlife Research Center (Prince George's County), SP - State Park, UMCF - University of Maryland Central Farm (Howard County), WMA - Wildlife Management Area.

*Locations:* Place names (with counties in parentheses) not in the index of the State highway map: Assateague Island (Worcester), Back River Waste Water Treatment Plant (Baltimore), Blackwater NWR (Dorchester), Cherry Creek (Garrett), Deep Creek Lake (Garrett), E. A. Vaughn WMA (Worcester), Eden Brook (Howard), Fort Smallwood Park (Anne Arundel), Hains Point (DC), Harford Glen (Harford), Hooper Island (Dorchester), Hughes Hollow (Montgomery), Irvine Natural Science Center (Baltimore), Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary (Anne Arundel), Lake Elkhorn (Howard), Liberty Reservoir (Carroll unless noted otherwise), Little Seneca Lake (Montgomery), Loch Raven (Baltimore), Mt. Pleasant (Howard), Patuxent River Park (Prince George's), Pennyfield (Montgomery), Piney Run Park (Carroll), Plum Tree Path (Howard), Rockburn Branch Park (Howard), Rock Creek Park (DC), Rocky Gap SP (Allegany), Sandy Point SP (Anne Arundel), Schooley Mill Park (Howard), Susquehanna SP (Harford), Sycamore Landing (Montgomery), Triadelphia Reservoir (Howard unless noted otherwise), Town Hill (Allegany), Tydings Island (Harford), Violettes Lock (Montgomery), Washington Monument SP (Washington unless noted otherwise).

*Loons, Grebes, Shearwaters, Petrels.* Seven **Red-throated Loons** were at Bellevue on Nov. 12 (Armistead+), but no large groups were reported this fall. Unusual **Common Loon** sightings were 1 at Loch Raven on Aug. 3-19 (Simon), and 2 at Assateague on Aug. 6 (Dobbins). Thirty-one were seen flying over Town Hill on Oct. 27 and 63 were checked off there on Nov. 22 (Paulus). Harry Armistead and party counted 115 on Nov. 12 at Bellevue, and Paul Spitzer tallied 450 in the Choptank River in Talbot County the next day. Inland **Pied-billed Grebes** were 17 at Piney Run on Nov. 13 (Ringler), 36 at Loch Raven on Nov. 24 (Simon), and 17 at Deep Creek Lake on Nov. 27 (Skipper). **Horned Grebes** were found inland as well with 1 unusually early at Loch Raven on Sept. 28 (Simon), 3 at Triadelphia on Oct. 15 (Farrell, Solem), and 3 at Little Seneca Lake on Nov. 23 (Warfield). Point Lookout hosted a single Horned Grebe on Oct. 15 (Jett, Stasz), and 70 were spotted at Bellevue on Nov. 12 (Armistead+). An Aug. 27 pelagic trip out of Ocean City yielded 3 **Cory's Shearwaters**, 1 **Greater Shearwater**, 2 **Audubon's Shearwaters**, 204 **Wilson's Storm-Petrels**, and 1 **Leach's Storm-Petrel** (Brian Patteson, Hoffman+). Three Wilson's Storm-Petrels were seen during a fishing trip off Ocean City on Oct. 10 with one landing on the boat (Hoffman).

*Gannets, Pelicans, Cormorants.* Patty Craig spotted 3 **Northern Gannets** at Point Lookout on Nov. 17, 9 were at Hooper Island on Nov. 19 (Armistead), about 100 flew over Ocean City on Nov. 4 (Warfield), and over 200 were at PRNAS on Nov. 25 (Lister). On Oct. 12th, 200 **Brown Pelicans** were tallied at Ocean City (Mumford); an immature was noted at Assateague on Nov. 27 (Hoffman). A Brown Pelican also appeared at PRNAS on Aug. 19 (Rambo, Lister). Conowingo Dam and the Ocean City inlet continue to be the

places to find **Great Cormorants**. Conowingo yielded a second-year bird on Sept. 23, joined by a first-year on Nov. 4 (Webb), with three seen on Nov. 26 (Scarpulla, Blom). Ocean City hosted an immature from Oct. 12 (Mumford) into the winter, and a Great Cormorant was noted at Hart-Miller on Oct. 3 (Jett). **Double-crested Cormorants** included an early sighting over Town Hill on Aug. 15 (Paulus), 37 at Back River on Sept. 17 (Scarpulla), 15 at Sycamore Landing on Oct. 1 (Wilson), 500 at Assateague on Oct. 2 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Patteson), 13 over Ellicott City on Oct. 17 (Ott), 1 at Loch Raven on Oct. 24 (Simon), 72 over Town Hill on Nov. 7 and 166 there on Nov. 22 (Paulus), 1 at Hog Island on Nov. 15 (Engle), 1 at Tilghman Island on Nov. 20 (Reese), 2 at Jug Bay on Nov. 22 (Mumford), 4 at Conowingo on Nov. 26 (Scarpulla, Blom), and 80 at Ocean City on Nov. 27 (Ringler).

**Herons, Ibises.** The first **American Bitterns** were 2 at Irish Grove on Aug. 25 (Reese), and single sightings included bitterns at Gunpowder River marsh in Harford County on Oct. 2 (Webb), near Trappe on Oct. 29 (Reese), and at Deal Island WMA on Nov. 26 (Ringler). Bill Dobbins reported 112 **Great Blue Herons** on the hydrilla between Jones Point and National Airport in DC on Aug. 16. **Great Egrets** included 4 at Piney Run on Aug. 4 and 6 at North Liberty Lake on Aug. 7 (Ringler), 125 at Bozman on Aug. 28 (Reese), 1 at Hughes Hollow on Nov. 8 (Bonham), 1 at Back River on Nov. 12 (Scarpulla, Tom Hahn), 5 at Blackwater on Nov. 19 (Armistead), 1 at Centennial Park on Nov. 27 for the latest and only November record in Howard County (Mary Jo Betts, Elayne and Jeff Metter), and 1 at West Ocean City on Nov. 28 (Hoffman, O'Brien). The high count for **Snowy Egrets** was 150 at Assateague on Aug. 16 and Aug. 28 (Hoffman+). Others were 6 at Tydings Island on Sept. 9 (Webb), 1 at Allens Fresh on Sept. 17 and Sept. 25 (Jett), 14 at Tanyard on Sept. 25 (Engle), 13 at Bellevue on Oct. 8 (Armistead+), and 2 at Assateague on Oct. 28 (Hoffman, Farrell). Hoffman had nice counts of 50 **Little Blue Herons** and 40 **Tricolored Herons** at Assateague on Aug. 16. Late sightings of single Little Blues were made at West Ocean City on Oct. 30 (Hoffman, Farrell), and at Blackwater on Nov. 16 (Jett). A **Cattle Egret** was discovered at National Airport on Aug. 30 (Dobbins), and 30 were in the Harwood area of Anne Arundel County on Oct. 1 (Mumford). Ten **Green Herons** were at Bellevue on Aug. 30 (Armistead), and an immature **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** was at the West Ocean City pond on Aug. 12 (Hoffman, O'Brien). An immature **White Ibis** was identified flying south with a flock of 60 **Glossy Ibises** at Assateague on Aug. 22 (Hoffman). Other Glossies were 1 near Emmitsburg on Sept. 1 (Weesner), 2 at Bellevue on Oct. 8 (Armistead+), and 3 over Centennial on Nov. 25 (Ott), unusually late for the Piedmont, and the first fall Howard County record.

**Swans, Geese.** A **Tundra Swan** was found at Pocomoke City sewage ponds on Oct. 29 (Hoffman, Czaplak, Farrell, Todd), and 188 were inland at Deep Creek Lake on Nov. 17 (Skipper). **Mute Swans** included 8 at Assateague on Sept. 9 (Hoffman, O'Brien), 40 at Newcomb on Oct. 6 (Reese), 4 at Blackwater on Oct. 30 (Ringler, Stasz), and over 150 in Talbot and Queen Anne's counties on Nov. 12 (Reese). A **Greater White-fronted Goose**, reportedly noted by Lori Byrne earlier in the week, was seen near Pocomoke City on Nov. 13 (Hoffman, Farrell, Jett, Stasz). **Snow Geese** this fall included 2 at Assateague on Sept. 24 (Jett), a blue form at Point Lookout on Oct. 15 (Jett, Stasz), 7,000 including 50 blues in Kent County near Routes 301 and 313 on Oct. 22 (Armistead+), 2500 including 1400 blues at Blackwater on Nov. 5 (Armistead+), 14 over Town Hill on Nov. 19 (Paulus), 10,000 at Jenkins Pond, Worcester County on Nov. 25 (Hoffman, Czaplak, Todd), and 25,000 at Pittsville on Nov. 27 (Ringler). A few **Ross' Geese** were noted this season with an adult at Snow Hill from Oct. 15 through Nov. 13 and 3 seen there on Oct. 29, including 1 blue phase (Hoffman, Czaplak, Farrell, Todd). Another blue phase Ross' was at Blackwater on Nov. 3 (Bonham), and a Ross' was at Jenkins Pond on Nov. 25 (Hoffman, Czaplak, Todd). The high for **Brant** was 500 at Assateague on Oct. 28 (Hoffman, Farrell), and 2 were at Hains Point on Oct. 18 (Dobbins). Observations of small race **Canada Geese**

included 1 in Queen Anne's County near Routes 310 and 213 on Oct. 22 (Armistead+), 2 at St. Michaels on Oct. 27 (Reese), and another at Snow Hill on Oct. 30 (Ringler, Stasz).

**Dabbling Ducks.** A **Ruddy Shelduck** exotic was at Emmitsburg on Aug. 28 (Weesner). **Wood Duck** high counts were 52 at Bellevue on Sept. 20 (Armistead+), and 150 there on Oct. 9 (David Bacab). Connie Skipper checked off a single Wood Duck at Deep Creek Lake on Nov. 27. Hoffman noted a **Green-winged Teal** at Assateague on Aug. 22, 550 were at Blackwater on Nov. 5 (Armistead+), and 55 were at Deep Creek Lake on Nov. 17 (Skipper). **American Black Ducks** included 70 at Eagles Nest Road in Worcester County on Oct. 14 (Wilson), and 200 at Jug Bay on Nov. 22 (Mumford). Some of the highs for **Mallards** were 125 at Piney Run on Aug. 4 (Ringler), 180 at Bellevue on Sept. 11 and 415 there on Nov. 6 (Armistead), and over 500 at the mouth of the Wye River in Queen Anne's County on Nov. 19 (Reese). A female **Northern Pintail** visited West Ocean City on Aug. 12 (Hoffman, O'Brien), and 400 were at Blackwater on Oct. 22 (Armistead+). **Blue-winged Teal** reports were 16 at Centennial on Sept. 7 (Farrell, Zeichner), 50 at West Ocean City on Sept. 11 (Hoffman), 50 at the Pocomoke City sewage ponds on Sept. 23 (Hoffman, Farrell), several at Elk Neck SP on Nov. 6 (Phillips), and a late bird at Piney Run on Nov. 11 (Ringler). The popular Pocomoke City sewage ponds yielded 80 **Northern Shovelers** on Sept. 23 and Oct. 29 (Hoffman, Farrell+), a single shoveler was at Deep Creek Lake on Nov. 17 (Skipper), and 100 were at the Berlin sewage ponds on Nov. 19 (Hoffman, O'Brien). **Gadwalls** included 4 at Tydings Island on Sept. 2 (Webb), 1 at Piney Run on Sept. 18 (Ringler), 28 at Deep Creek Lake on Nov. 17 (Skipper), and 45 at Loch Raven on Nov. 21 (Simon). A drake **Eurasian Wigeon** was sorted out at Deal Island WMA on Oct. 19 (Brodericks), and another at Loch Raven on Nov. 17 (Simon). **American Wigeons** were 1 at Assateague on Aug. 16 (Hoffman), 4 at Tydings Island on Aug. 31 (Webb), 1 at Piney Run on Sept. 10 (Ringler), 24 at Loch Raven on Sept. 20 and 250 there on Nov. 11 (Simon), and 85 at Blackwater on Nov. 12 (Armistead+).

**Diving Ducks.** Inland **Canvasback** reports were few, with one at Wilde Lake on Oct. 29 (Zeichner), 6 at Lake Elkhorn on Nov. 27 (Wilkinson), and 13 at Piney Run on Nov. 13 (Ringler). A **Redhead** was discovered at Little Seneca Lake on Oct. 27 (Warfield), another was at Pennyfield on Oct. 29 (Bonham), and 7 were at the Ocean City inlet on Nov. 27 (Hoffman, Czaplak, Todd). Bob Ringler found two **Ring-necked Ducks** at Piney Run on Sept. 18, 3 were at Loch Raven on Sept. 20 (Simon), 1 was at West Ocean City on Oct. 2 (Hoffman, O'Brien), and 525 were at Loch Raven on Nov. 25 (Simon). A **Lesser Scaup** was observed at Hurlock on Sept. 23 (Jett), and higher numbers were 93 at Deep Creek Lake on Nov. 17 (Skipper), and 25,000 on the Gunpowder River seen from the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Grounds on Nov. 26 (Webb). An immature **Common Eider** was at the Ocean City inlet on Oct. 15 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Czaplak, Todd), 2 were there on Nov. 6 (Hoffman), a male and a female were there on Nov. 12 (Hoffman, Farrell), and an immature male was there on Nov. 27 (Hoffman, Czaplak, Todd, Ringler). A female **Harlequin Duck** was at Ocean City on Oct. 23 (Brodericks) and Oct. 30 (Ringler, Stasz); an immature male was there on Nov. 12-27 (Hoffman, Farrell, Jett, Stasz), and was joined by an adult male on Nov. 23 (Brodericks). There were 45 **Oldsquaws** at Bellevue on Nov. 12 (Armistead+). **Black Scoters** were 2 at Assateague on Aug. 12 (Hoffman, O'Brien), and 1 at Point Lookout on Oct. 1 (Craig). Numbers for the **Surf Scoter** were higher with 55 at Bellevue on Oct. 8 (Armistead+), over 30 at Point Lookout on Oct. 15 (Jett, Stasz), 210 at Bellevue on Oct. 23 (Armistead), and 500 at Ocean City on Oct. 30 (Hoffman, Farrell). Rounding out the scoters, an early immature drake **White-winged Scoter**, apparently injured, was seen on the upper Elk River on Aug. 10 (Griffith). Others were 1 at Bellevue on Nov. 5 (Armistead+), 20 at the mouth of the Miles River, Talbot County on Nov. 12 (Reese), 50 at Tilghman Island on Nov. 13 (Reese), 15 at Assateague on Nov. 27 (Hoffman), and 15 the same day at Ocean City (Hoffman, Czaplak, Todd). Highs for the **Bufflehead** were 91 at Loch Raven on Nov. 7 (Simon), 150 at

Assateague on Nov. 11 (Hoffman, Farrell), 125 at Bellevue (Armistead+) and 200 at Tilghman Island (Reese) on Nov. 13, 380 at Deep Creek Lake on Nov. 17 (Skipper), and 40 at Ocean Pines on Nov. 27 (Ringler). Mark Wallace counted 60 **Hooded Mergansers** at a pond near Jennings Chapel Road in Howard County on Nov. 11, equaling the number there in early December 1993. Fifty Hoodeds were at Deep Creek Lake on Nov. 27 (Skipper). A female **Red-breasted Merganser** was at Bellevue on Oct. 8 (Armistead+). Higher numbers were 50 at Assateague on Oct. 28 (Hoffman, Farrell), 55 at Bellevue on Nov. 12 (Armistead+), 175 on the Gunpowder River at Aberdeen Proving Grounds on Nov. 26 (Webb), and 75 at Ocean City on Nov. 27 (Ringler). The best tallies for **Ruddy Ducks** were 300 at Pocomoke City on Oct. 29 (Hoffman, Czaplak, Farrell, Todd), 730 at Deep Creek Lake on Nov. 17 (Skipper), and 105 at Piney Run on Nov. 25 (Ringler).

*Vultures, Ospreys, Bald Eagles.* Check Table 1 for the results of the fall hawk watch at Town Hill. Mark Hoffman reported 20 **Black Vultures** in the South Point area of Worcester County on Oct. 22. Gene Scarpulla and Rick Blom tallied 220 at Conowingo Dam on Nov. 26, and 26 were at Burrsville on Nov. 27 (Reese). **Turkey Vultures** included 60 in Bittinger on Oct. 7 (Becky Opel-Yoder), 60 in the South Point area on Oct. 22 (Hoffman), and 170 at Conowingo on Nov. 26 (Scarpulla, Blom). Reese had a nice count of 25 **Ospreys** at Tilghman Island on Aug. 21; the last sighting of an Osprey at Piney Run was Nov. 13 (Ringler), 1 was at Loch Raven on Nov. 26 (Simon), and the last viewing of the summering Osprey at Philadelphia was on Nov. 27 (Farrell, Solem). Bob Ringler saw 2 **Bald Eagles** periodically throughout the second half of the season at Piney Run including an adult on Nov. 6 and 13. At Conowingo, 22 Bald Eagles, including 8 adults, were noted on Nov. 13 (Scarpulla), 1 was flying at Deep Creek Lake on Nov. 17 (Skipper), an adult was near Lily Pons on Nov. 26 and an amazing 50 were in sight at one time in Somerset County near Pocomoke City on Nov. 27 (Ringler).

*Harrier, Accipiters, Buteos, Golden Eagles.* Connie Skipper reported a **Northern Harrier** at the Cherry Creek banding station on Sept. 3. A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** was at Wilde Lake on Aug. 28 (Zeichner), 33 were seen at Bellevue on Sept. 18 (Armistead+), and 20 were notched at Point Lookout on Oct. 15 (Jett, Stasz). Five **Cooper's Hawks** were listed at Bellevue on Sept. 18 (Armistead+). On Nov. 11, 39 **Red-shouldered Hawks** were counted at Turkey Point in 2 1/2 hours (Griffith, Gant, Gordon). **Broad-winged Hawks** included over 100 at Tilghman Island on Sept. 12 (Reese), 210 south of Ellicott City on Sept. 18 (Ott), over 1200 over Jackson Station, Cecil County in 1 hour on Sept. 18 (Bob Rineer), 150 at Aberdeen Proving Grounds on Sept. 19 (Webb), and a late bird over Dameron on Nov. 7 (Craig). The Turkey Point hawk watch location yielded 176 **Red-tailed Hawks** on Nov. 11 in 2 1/2 hours (Griffith, Gant, Gordon), and 101 Red-tails were tallied near Sanner Road in Howard County in 3 hours the same day (Wes Earp). **Rough-legged Hawks** were 1 at Washington Monument SP on Oct. 17 (Dobbins, Robin Carter), 1 at Blackwater on Nov. 19 (Armistead), and 1 near the intersection of Route 29 and Route 100 in Howard County on Nov. 25 (Ott). An adult **Golden Eagle** was identified at Blackwater on Nov. 12 and 19 (Armistead+), a subadult Golden was at Stemmer's Run WMA in Cecil County on Nov. 12 (Griffith), and a subadult was at Conowingo on Nov. 26 (Scarpulla, Blom).

*Falcons.* Twenty-six **American Kestrels** were tallied at Blackwater on Sept. 24 (Armistead+), and Bonnie Ott observed a **Merlin** near her home in Ellicott City from Aug. 30 through Nov. 5. Other Merlins were 2 at Assateague on Sept. 11 (Hoffman, O'Brien+); 1 at Myrtle Grove WMA, Charles County on Sept. 17 (Jett); 2 in the South Point area of Worcester County on Sept. 18 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Todd, Czaplak); one at Ridge (Craig, Jim and Bob Boxwell) and 1 at Allens Fresh on Sept. 26 (Jett); 2 to 3 at Point Lookout on Oct. 1, 1 in Dameron on Oct. 2, 1 eating in a tree at Point Lookout on Oct. 5, and 1 there on Oct. 13 (Craig); 6 at Turkey Point on Oct. 9 (Griffith+); 1 at Bellevue

**Table 1. HAWK MIGRATION AT TOWN HILL, FALL 1994,  
ALLEGANY COUNTY**

**COMPILED BY JIM PAULUS**

| SPECIES                       | FIRST | LAST  | TOTAL | BEST DAYS                |
|-------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------------------------|
| Turkey Vulture                | 10/26 | 11/26 | 160   | 42 on 10/27, 25 on 11/02 |
| Osprey                        | 10/21 | 10/21 | 1     |                          |
| Bald Eagle                    | 10/28 | 11/24 | 3     |                          |
| Northern Harrier              | 10/15 | 11/26 | 37    | 5 on 11/19, 4 on 11/08   |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk            | 10/15 | 11/30 | 134   | 15 on 11/25, 13 on 11/05 |
| Cooper's Hawk                 | 10/17 | 11/29 | 20    | 4 on 10/22, 2 on 11/27   |
| Northern Goshawk              | 11/07 | 11/22 | 3     | 2 on 11/22               |
| Red-shouldered Hawk           | 10/15 | 11/29 | 23    | 4 on 11/19, 3 on 11/10   |
| Red-tailed Hawk               | 10/15 | 11/30 | 353   | 42 on 11/22, 39 on 11/19 |
| Rough-legged Hawk             | 11/19 | 11/25 | 2     |                          |
| Golden Eagle                  | 10/22 | 11/30 | 44    | 10 on 11/22, 9 on 11/11  |
| American Kestrel              | 10/16 | 11/7  | 3     |                          |
| Merlin                        | 10/22 | 10/22 | 1     |                          |
| Peregrine Falcon              | 10/18 | 10/18 | 1     |                          |
| Unidentified                  |       |       | 15    |                          |
| Total<br>(37 days, 178 hours) | 10/15 | 11/30 | 800   | 60 on 11/22, 55 on 11/19 |

on Oct. 9 (George Armistead+); 1 at Routes 309 and 404 on Oct. 24 (Armistead); and 1 near Pocomoke City on Nov. 13 and 1 at Blackwater on Nov. 20 (Jett). Interesting **Peregrine Falcons** included 1 at Assateague on Aug. 22 (Hoffman), an immature at Point Lookout on Sept. 11 and 1 there on Oct. 1 (Craig), an immature at Hurlock on Sept. 23 (Jett), 4 at Assateague on Sept. 30 (Hoffman, O'Brien), 6 at Turkey Point on Oct. 9 (Griffith+), 1 over Rockburn Branch Park on Oct. 15 (Ralph Geuder+), 1 at Cambridge and 1 near Blackwater on Nov. 5 (Armistead+), and 1 on the water tower in Ocean City on Nov. 13 and an immature at Blackwater on Nov. 16 (Jett).

**Turkeys, Rails, Coots.** Nice counts for **Wild Turkeys** were 7 at Rum Point, Charles County on Sept. 17 (Jett), 12 in Carroll County at Liberty Lake on Oct. 5 (Wayne Abbott), and 19 at Washington Monument SP on Oct. 28 (Dobbins). Mark Hoffman notched a **Black Rail** at Assateague on Sept. 30, 10 **Virginia Rails** at Truitt's Landing on Oct. 16, and 10 more at Assateague on Nov. 19. A **Sora** at the Gateway Business Park in Howard County on Sept. 17 was a nice find (Doug Stinson), and an adult **Common Moorhen** was discovered at the Gunpowder River delta in Harford County on Oct. 2 (Webb). Highs for the **American Coot** were 50 at Loch Raven on Oct. 6 (Simon), 150 at Little Seneca Lake on Oct. 11 (Bonham), 300 at Jug Bay on Oct. 25 (Mumford), over 550 at Deal Island WMA on Nov. 3 (Brodericks), 540 at Havre de Grace on Nov. 4 (Webb), 175 at Piney Run on Nov. 11 (Ringler), 800 at Little Seneca Lake on Nov. 19 (Bonham), 1700 at Loch Raven during Nov. 19-23 (Simon), and 794 at Deep Creek Lake on Nov. 27 (Skipper).

*Plovers, Oystercatchers, Stilts, Avocets.* High counts of **Black-bellied Plovers** were 60 at Ocean City on Aug. 31 (Hoffman), and 120 there on Oct. 30 (Ringler, Stasz). The first **Lesser Golden-Plovers** were 1 near Emmitsburg on Aug. 16 (Weesner), 1 at Assateague on Aug. 28-31 (Hoffman+), 1 in the South Point area of Worcester County on Sept. 9 (Hoffman), and 2 the same day at Hurlock (Jett). Other Goldens were 6 at Jones Point in DC on Sept. 11 and 14 there on Sept. 12 (Dobbins), 1 at Assateague (Hoffman) and 1 at Tydings Island the same day (Webb), 1 at Assateague on Oct. 1 (Hoffman, O'Brien), 1 at Hart-Miller on Oct. 3 (Jett), and 3 near Emmitsburg on Oct. 8 (Weesner). **Semipalmated Plovers** included 150 at Assateague on Aug. 15 (Hoffman, O'Brien), and 3 at Hooper Island on Nov. 19 (Armistead). Nice counts for **Killdeer** were 40 at McMaster Road, Worcester County on Aug. 6 (Hoffman), 108 at Blackwater on Nov. 12 (Armistead+), and 120 at Back River on Nov. 12 (Scarpulla, Tom Hahn). Bob Ringler and Jim Stasz totaled up 57 **American Oystercatchers** at Ocean City on Oct. 30, and George Jett found 5 **Black-necked Stilts** at Deal Island WMA on Aug. 6. Three **American Avocets** were also discovered at Deal Island on Aug. 6 (Iliff, Stasz) and were still present on Aug. 26 (Dobbins). One to three avocets were at West Ocean City, Aug. 31—Nov. 13 (Hoffman, Jett, Brodericks+), and 1 was at Blackwater on Oct. 22-23 (Armistead, Mumford+).

*Tringine Sandpipers.* The high report for **Greater Yellowlegs** was 150 at Assateague on Aug. 15 (Hoffman, O'Brien); 30 were at Jug Bay on Oct. 25 (Mumford), and 33 were at Blackwater on Nov. 25 (Graff). **Lesser Yellowlegs** were 100 at Assateague on Aug. 6 (Hoffman), and a late bird was at Blackwater on Nov. 20 (Armistead, Carolyn Mills). Larry Bonham found 2 late **Solitary Sandpipers** at Hughes Hollow on Oct. 29, and Mark Hoffman and Mike O'Brien tallied 200 **Willets** at Assateague on Aug. 15 where there were also 17 **Spotted Sandpipers**. Two Willets were at Point Lookout on Aug. 24 (Craig, Bishop). Flights of **Upland Sandpipers** arrived at area airports pretty much on schedule with 42 at PRNAS on Aug. 1 (Rambo, Lister), 1 at Easton Airport on Aug. 6 (Dobbins), and 13 at Salisbury Airport on Aug. 7 (Reese+). Others were 1 at McMaster Road, Worcester County on Aug. 6 with 6 there on Aug. 14 (Hoffman), 3 at Assateague on Aug. 15 (Hoffman, O'Brien) and 1 there on Aug. 22 (Hoffman), and 10 at the Frederick County Airport on Sept. 1 (Weesner). The single Upland at Easton on Sept. 13 was a little late (Reese). **Whimbrels** included 30 at Assateague on Aug. 15 and 2 there on Oct. 1 (Hoffman, O'Brien). **Hudsonian Godwits** were present this season with single birds at Assateague on Sept. 3 (Hoffman, Czaplak, Southworths+), and at Blackwater on Nov. 19-23 (Armistead, Jett, Dobbins+). Hoffman and O'Brien found single **Marbled Godwits** that appeared to be different birds at Assateague on Aug. 22 and Sept. 11.

*Calidrine Sandpipers.* Two **Sanderlings** were found inland at Wilde Lake on Sept. 11 (Odermatt+), and the high count was 1500 at Assateague on Oct. 17 (Hoffman). Highs for **Semipalmated Sandpipers** were 100 at Assateague on Aug. 6 and Sept. 3 and a late bird at West Ocean City on Oct. 23 (Hoffman+). **Western Sandpipers** were found inland with about 5 at North Liberty on Aug. 7 and 1 at Westminster on Aug. 17 (Ringler), and another near Emmitsburg on Aug. 28 (Weesner). Hoffman found 40 Westerns at West Ocean City on Sept. 9-11. There were 250 **Least Sandpipers** at Assateague on Aug. 15 (Hoffman, O'Brien), and 39 at Back River on Sept. 11 (Scarpulla). **White-rumped Sandpipers** included 5 at Assateague on Aug. 6 (Hoffman), and single sightings at Blackwater on Oct. 22 (Armistead+), at West Ocean City on Oct. 23 (Hoffman), and near Blackwater on Oct. 27 (Brodericks); 3 were at Blackwater on Oct. 30 (Ringler, Stasz). Solo **Baird's Sandpipers**, always nice finds, were identified this season at Westminster, Aug. 18-22 (Ringler), and at the Easton sewage plant on Sept. 28 (Brodericks). Twenty-five **Pectoral Sandpipers** were tallied at Assateague on Aug. 22 (Hoffman), and a late one was at Loch Raven on Nov. 2 (Simon). Mark Hoffman found a **Purple Sandpiper** at Ocean City on Oct. 27. **Dunlins** included 1200 at Ocean City and 500 at Blackwater on

Oct. 30 (Ringler, Stasz), and 620 at Blackwater on Nov. 19 (Armistead). Dobbins found 2 **Stilt Sandpipers** at Deal Island WMA on Aug. 26. Others were 2 near Emmitsburg on Sept. 1 (Weesner), 6 at West Ocean City on Sept. 9 (Hoffman), and 2 there on Oct. 16 (Brodericks, Vaughns). A **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** was reported at the Easton sewage treatment plant on Sept. 13 (Reese).

*Dowitchers, Woodcocks, Phalaropes.* Hoffman and O'Brien counted 50 **Short-billed Dowitchers** at Assateague on Aug. 15, and a late one was found inland at Wilde Lake on Oct. 3 (Kerwin+). **Long-billed Dowitchers** included 45 at Blackwater on Nov. 12 (Armistead+), and 7 at Jug Bay on Nov. 22 (Mumford). Jan Reese checked off 7 **American Woodcocks** at Starr on Nov. 7. A **Wilson's Phalarope** was reported at Jones Point in DC on Sept. 2 (Dobbins), and another was located on the late date of Sept. 18 at the West Ocean City pond (Hoffman, O'Brien, Czaplak, Todd).

*Jaegers, Gulls.* A **Pomarine Jaeger** was notched on the Aug. 27 pelagic trip out of Ocean City (Hoffman, O'Brien, Patteson+), and 2 **Parasitic Jaegers** were at Ocean City on Oct. 15 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Todd, Czaplak). Highs for **Laughing Gulls** were 6000 at the Worcester County landfill on Aug. 14 (Hoffman), 40 at Tydings Island on Sept. 4 (Webb), 100 at Liberty Lake in Baltimore and Carroll counties on Oct. 18 increasing to 300 on Oct. 19 (Scarpulla), 550 at Skipton, Talbot County on Oct. 31 (Reese), 350 at Cecilton on Nov. 2 (Reese), 1800 at Blackwater on Nov. 5 (Armistead+), and 486 at Back River on Nov. 6 and 241 there on Nov. 20 (Scarpulla, Tom Hahn). Bob Ringler reported 4 adult and 1 immature Laughing Gulls at Piney Run on Nov. 13. **Bonaparte's Gulls** included 7 immatures at Conowingo Dam on Aug. 27 (Webb), 95 at Bellevue on Nov. 12 (Armistead+), 75 at the mouth of the Miles River and Eastern Bay in Queen Anne's and Talbot counties on Nov. 12 (Reese), 15 at Denton on Nov. 14 (Hewitt), 52 at Conowingo on Nov. 26 (Scarpulla, Blom), and 150 at Ocean City on Nov. 27 (Hoffman, Todd, Czaplak). The first juvenile **Herring Gull** was noted at Piney Run on Aug. 15 (Ringler). The many **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** included an immature at Assateague on Aug. 22 (Hoffman), 1 at Tydings Island on Oct. 26 (Webb), 3 adults at Conowingo on Nov. 13 (Scarpulla), 2 at the Worcester County landfill on Nov. 19 (Hoffman, O'Brien), and 4 at Georgetown Reservoir on Nov. 20 (Dobbins). Jane Farrell and Jo Solem discovered an adult Lesser Black-backed and an adult **Glaucous Gull** at Triadelphia Reservoir on Nov. 27.

*Kittiwake, Terns, Skimmers.* An immature **Black-legged Kittiwake** was identified at the Ocean City inlet on Nov. 27 (Hoffman, Czaplak, Todd). Mark Wallace noted a **Caspian Tern** flying over Dayton on Aug. 4, 2 were at Centennial on Sept. 12 (Farrell), 12 at Blackwater on Sept. 24 (Armistead+), and 1 at Blackwater on Oct. 22 (Armistead+). Interesting **Royal Terns** were 10 at Choptank on Aug. 6 (D. Ford), 150 at Ocean City on Aug. 7 (Reese+), 6 at Neavitt on Oct. 30 (Reese), and 3 at Ocean City on Nov. 27 (Ringler). It was a good season for **Sandwich Terns** with 6 at Assateague on Aug. 6 and 5 at Ocean City the same day (Hoffman), with 1 remaining at Ocean City to Aug. 31 (Hoffman), and at Assateague to Sept. 3 (Hoffman, Farrell, Southworths+). One was at Point Lookout on Aug. 15 (Rambo) and Sept. 2 (Craig). A late **Common Tern** was at Ocean City on Oct. 15 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Todd, Czaplak). **Forster's Terns** included 120 at Ridge on Sept. 14 (Craig), 4 at Sycamore Landing on Oct. 1 (Wilson), 2 at Violettes Lock on Oct. 7 (Bonham), 500 at Ocean City on Oct. 10 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Farrell), 60 at Blackwater on Oct. 22 (Armistead+), 12 at Tilghman Island on Nov. 20 (Reese), 1 at Jug Bay on Nov. 22 (Mumford), and 60 at Ocean City on Nov. 27 (Ringler). Three **Least Terns** were at Ocean City on Sept. 2 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Farrell), and 2 **Bridled Terns** were added to the list for the Ocean City pelagic trip on Aug. 27 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Patteson+). **Black Terns** were numerous with 4 to 7 at Point Lookout, Aug. 14-15 (Rambo), 1 at Piney Run on Aug. 15 and 2 at Westminister on Aug. 18 (Ringler), 7 at Assateague on Aug. 15 (Hoffman, O'Brien),

7 in DC on Aug. 17 (Dobbins), 39 at Point Lookout on Aug. 18 (Craig, Boxwell), 10 at Hains Point on Aug. 23 (Dobbins), 14 on the Susquehanna River in Harford County on Aug. 26 (Webb), 1 at Lake Elkhorn on Aug. 29 for the only 1994 Howard County record (Wilkinson), 1 at Tydings Island, Aug. 31 to Sept. 4 (Webb), 1 at Hurlock on Sept. 23 (Jett), and 1 at the Easton sewage plant on Sept. 28 (Brodericks). Black Terns were also at PRNAS with 2 on Aug. 15 for the first Base record (Rambo, Lister). A **White-winged Tern** reported at Point Lookout, Aug. 14-21 (Rambo, Craig), and will be documented separately. There were 170 **Black Skimmers** at Ocean City on Aug. 7 (Reese), and 20 there on Oct. 16 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Czaplak, Todd).

*Doves, Cuckoos, Owls.* Jan Reese found 150 **Rock Doves** in a field at Wye Mills on Nov. 3. A **Black-billed Cuckoo** was noted at Point Lookout on Aug. 30 (Boxwell), and another at Tilghman Island on Sept. 11 (Reese). A **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was discovered at Assateague on Oct. 12 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Farrell). Jan Reese observed a **Great Horned Owl** feeding a fledgling at St. Michaels on Aug. 30, and Bob Ringler checked off 2 early **Short-eared Owls** at Irish Grove WS on Oct. 29. A **Long-eared Owl** was at PRNAS on Nov. 28 (Rambo), and a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was heard calling at Assateague on Nov. 19 (Jett, Czaplak+).

*Caprimulgids, Swifts, Hummingbirds, Woodpeckers.* **Common Nighthawks** included 119 seen over Bel Air in a 2-hour period on Aug. 23 (Webb), at least 150 over Centennial on Sept. 10 (Sue and Phil Probst), and 10 late nighthawks flying over Dameron on Oct. 9 (Craig). A dead **Chuck-will's-widow** was found in Easton on Sept. 5 (B. Sindermann). Inez Glime noted a **Whip-poor-will** at Federalsburg on Sept. 20, and a late singing bird was at Waldorf on Sept. 26 (Jett). Nice counts for **Chimney Swifts** were 300 at Berlin on Aug. 16 (Hoffman), over 100 at Centreville on Aug. 30, and over 200 funneling into a chimney in Easton on Sept. 29 (Reese), and 100 at Sycamore Landing on Oct. 1 (Wilson). A late **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was at Fair Hill on Oct. 9 (McDaniel), a female frequenting Salisbury was last seen on Oct. 15 (Brodericks), and another was at Tanyard on Oct. 23 (H. Christopher). A possible adult **Rufous Hummingbird** was reported in Hollywood on Aug. 17-20 (Drew and Kyle Rambo). George Jett tallied about 20 **Red-headed Woodpeckers** at three locations along Route 224 from Chicamuxen to Maryland Point on Sept. 17, and about 350 **Northern Flickers** were at Assateague on Sept. 30 (Hoffman, O'Brien).

*Flycatchers.* One **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was heard on Sept. 3 and one was banded on Sept. 8 at Cherry Creek (Skipper). Other reports for the hard-to-find Olive-sided were 1 at Centennial on Sept. 15 (Farrell) and Sept. 18 (Osenton), and 2 at Rockburn Branch Park on Sept. 17 (Ott). Unusual was a lingering **Eastern Wood-Pewee** at Berlin on Oct. 23 (Brodericks). A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was noted at Rock Creek Park from Aug. 25 to Sept. 6 (Dobbins), and the last report was near Newark on Sept. 24 (Hoffman, Farrell). The last **Acadian Flycatcher** banded at Irvine was on Sept. 21. A **Willow Flycatcher** was reported at Lake Elkhorn on Sept. 30 (Wilkinson), and 3 **Least Flycatchers** were listed at Brown's Bridge on Aug. 23 (Farrell, Behrstock). Other Leasts were 3 at Assateague on Aug. 28 (Hoffman+), and 1 at Dameron, Sept. 4-8 (Craig). A **Western Kingbird** was reported near Dameron on Oct. 23 (Craig, Jett, Stasz, Bishop). Sightings of the **Eastern Kingbird** included 20 at Assateague on Aug. 28-29 (Hoffman+), 37 at Harmony on Aug. 29 (Reese), 1 near Ellicott City on Sept. 11 (Ott), 1 at Bellevue on Sept. 18 (Armistead+), 1 at Assateague on Oct. 1 (Hoffman, O'Brien), and 1 at Parsonsburg on Oct. 17 (Brodericks).

*Swallows, Corvids.* **Purple Martins** included 85 at Great Mills High School in St. Mary's County on Aug. 16 (Reese) and 50 at Assateague on Sept. 10 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Jett, Stasz). Highs for **Tree Swallows** were 2000 in the South Point area on Sept. 18

(Hoffman, O'Brien, Todd, Czaplak), 2500 at Spesutie Island in Harford County on Sept. 22 (Webb), and 2000 at Assateague on Oct. 10 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Farrell). A single Tree Swallow was noted at Greensboro on Nov. 2 (Hewitt). Two **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** were at Bellevue on Oct. 8 (Armistead+), a single **Cliff Swallow** was at Spesutie Island in Harford County on Sept. 22 (Webb), and a very late **Barn Swallow** was at Piney Run from Oct. 15 to Oct. 23 (Ringler). **Blue Jays** of note were 175 at Tilghman Island on Sept. 25 (Reese, Don Merritt), 100 at Sycamore Landing on Oct. 1 (Wilson), and 150 at Tilghman Island on Oct. 2 (Reese). **Fish Crows** included 110 at Blackwater on Nov. 19 (Armistead) and 300 at the Worcester County landfill on Nov. 19 (Hoffman, O'Brien). A kettle of 14 **Common Ravens** was at Town Hill on Aug. 8 (Paulus), and a group of 8 was observed at Washington Monument SP on Sept. 29 (Fritz).

*Tufted Titmouse, Creeper, Wrens, Kinglets, Gnatcatchers.* The **Tufted Titmouse** reported at Tilghman Island on Aug. 21 was possibly a migrant (Reese), and Aug. 20 was an unusual date for a **Brown Creeper** at Schooley Mill (Zeichner). Ten **Winter Wrens** were at Ocean City on Oct. 12 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Farrell), and increasingly hard-to-find **Sedge Wrens** included 2 at Assateague on Sept. 24 (Hoffman, Farrell, Jett), 2 at Assateague on Oct. 24 (Hoffman), 2 at Irish Grove on Oct. 30 (Ringler), and 1 at Assateague on Nov. 19 (Hoffman, O'Brien). Forty **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were checked off at Assateague on Oct. 16 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Todd, Czaplak). Two early **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were at Salisbury on Sept. 2 (Brodericks), and 25 Rubys were at Assateague on Oct. 12 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Farrell). **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** included 25 at Tilghman Island on Sept. 5 (Reese), 1 at Centennial on Sept. 21 (Farrell), 2 at Assateague on Sept. 30 (Hoffman, O'Brien), and a late bird near New Windsor on Oct. 8 (Ringler).

*Thrushes, Mimids, Pipits, Waxwings, Shrike.* Harry Armistead counted 60 **Eastern Bluebirds** between Bellevue and Royal Oak on Nov. 6. **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** were reported this fall with 1 at Salisbury on Sept. 11 (Brodericks), and 2 at Henryton on Oct. 4 (Ott, Solem, Zeichner). A **Hermit Thrush** was banded at Irvine on Sept. 30, a single Hermit Thrush was in northwest Worcester County on Oct. 2 (Hoffman, O'Brien), 8 were present at Washington Monument SP on Oct. 28 (Weesner), and at least 30 were at PRNAS on Nov. 26 (Rambo). Highs for **American Robins** were 150 at Schooley Mill on Oct. 27 (Solem), 100 at Mt. Airy on Nov. 5 (Ringler), and 750 at Tilghman Island on Nov. 6 (Reese). At Assateague, 60 **Gray Catbirds** were totaled on both Aug. 16 (Hoffman) and Aug. 28 (Hoffman, Czaplak, Farrell, Todd), and 20 **Brown Thrashers** were there on Sept. 24 and again on Sept. 26 (Hoffman, Farrell+). Forty **American Pipits** were found in a field at the intersection of Route 12 and Nassawango Road on Nov. 13 (Hoffman, Farrell). Good counts for **Cedar Waxwings** were 150 at Washington Monument SP on Aug. 30 (Weesner), 110 at Rockburn Branch Park on Oct. 26 (Ott, Solem), 210 at Blackwater and 195 at Bellevue on Nov. 5 (Armistead+), and over 3000 at Tilghman Island on Nov. 6 (Reese). A **Loggerhead Shrike** was reported in Denton on Oct. 7 (Nuttle).

*Vireos.* A **White-eyed Vireo** was reported near Salisbury on Oct. 24 (Reese), and the high for **Solitary Vireos** was 4 at Assateague on Oct. 11 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Farrell). The last Solitary Vireo banded at Irvine was on Nov. 3. Bob Ringler found a late **Yellow-throated Vireo** at McKeldin on Sept. 24. **Warbling Vireos** were in good numbers at Assateague, seen Sept. 2-19, with 3 there on Sept. 11th (Hoffman+); another Warbling Vireo was banded at Cherry Creek on Sept. 23 (Skipper). Solo **Philadelphia Vireos** were at Rock Creek Park on Aug. 25 and again on Sept. 8 (Dobbins). Philadelphias were seen at Assateague, Sept. 3-26, with 2 on Sept. 11 (Hoffman+). Others were 1 at Centennial on Sept. 16 (Ott), 6 during the Howard County fall count on Sept. 17, 1 at Loch Raven on Sept. 27 and Oct. 2 (Simon), and 1 at Washington Monument SP on Oct. 2 (Weesner). **Red-eyed Vireos** included 20 at E.A. Vaughn WMA on Sept. 25 (Hoffman, Farrell), and a single bird at Pennyfield on Nov. 14 (Bonham).

*Vermivora* and *Parula* **Warblers**. **Blue-winged Warblers** began with 1 at Assateague on Aug. 12 (Hoffman, O'Brien), the high report was of 8 at Point Lookout on Aug. 23 (Craig), 1 was at Salisbury on Sept. 22 (Brodericks), and a late straggler was at E.A. Vaughn WMA on Oct. 1 (Hoffman, O'Brien). **Golden-winged Warblers** included 1 at Cherry Creek on Aug. 20 (Skipper), a male at Point Lookout on Aug. 23 (Craig), and other single bird reports at Turkey Point on Aug. 26 (Powers) and at Salisbury on Sept. 22 (Brodericks). A **Brewster's Warbler** was reported at Rock Creek Park on Sept. 11 (Dobbs). Early **Orange-crowned Warblers** were single sightings at Dameron on Sept. 15 (Craig), and at Rockburn Branch Park on Oct. 5 (Ott). Other solo Orange-crowneds were at Assateague on Oct. 22 and on Oct. 29 (Hoffman+). An early **Nashville Warbler** was at Turkey Point on Aug. 23 (Griffith, Gant). Others were 5 at Assateague on Oct. 11 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Farrell), 1 at Mt. Pleasant on Oct. 15 (Osenton), and the last one banded at Irvine on Oct. 22. Good counts for **Northern Parulas** were 15 at E.A. Vaughn WMA on Sept. 25 (Hoffman, Farrell), and 15 at Assateague on Sept. 30 (Hoffman, O'Brien). Another Parula was at Salisbury on Oct. 19 (Brodericks).

*Dendroica* **Warblers**. **Chestnut-sided Warblers** included 1 at E.A. Vaughn WMA on Aug. 14 (Hoffman, Czaplak, Farrell, Todd+), and 10 at Point Lookout on Aug. 23 (Craig). High reports for **Magnolia Warblers** were 20 at Assateague on Sept. 10 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Jett, Stasz) and 19 at Rockburn Branch Park on Sept. 17 (Ott). **Cape May Warblers** of note were 1 at Assateague on Aug. 28 (Hoffman, O'Brien+), 150 at Assateague on Sept. 30 (Hoffman, O'Brien), and a very late bird at Loch Raven on Nov. 13 (Wheeler). A **Black-throated Blue Warbler** was at Denton on Sept. 14 (Nuttle), 40 were at Assateague on Sept. 30 (Hoffman, O'Brien), and the last one banded at Irvine was on Oct. 19. **Yellow-rumped Warblers** included 3 at Dameron on Sept. 3 (Craig), 1200 at Assateague on Oct. 11 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Farrell), and 150 at Plum Tree Path on Oct. 16 (Farrell, Ott, Solem). Single **Black-throated Green Warblers** were at Wilde Lake on Aug. 23 (Zeichner) and at Lake Elkhorn on Oct. 22 (Wilkinson). Single **Yellow-throated Warblers** were at Eden Brook on Sept. 12 (Zeichner), at Dameron on Sept. 15 (Craig), and at Assateague on Sept. 16 (Hoffman). The Yellow-throated at New Windsor on Sept. 25 was very late (Ringler). A **Pine Warbler** was at Loch Raven on Oct. 29 (Simon), and a migrant **Prairie Warbler** was at Tilghman Island on Aug. 21 (Reese). Bonham reported a Prairie Warbler at Pennyfield on Oct. 19. **Palm Warblers** were 1 at Assateague on Sept. 10 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Jett, Stasz), 23 westerns banded at Cherry Creek on Sept. 18 (Skipper), 175 at Assateague on Sept. 30 (Hoffman, O'Brien), 12 at Mt. Pleasant on Oct. 19 (Ott, Solem), 1 at Egypt Road on Nov. 20 (Armistead, Carolyn Mills), and a western in Charles County on Nov. 27 (Jett). Single **Blackpoll Warblers** were at Bellevue on Aug. 30 (Armistead), and at Assateague on Oct. 28 (Hoffman, Farrell). A **Cerulean Warbler** visited Schooley Mill Park on Aug. 24 (Behrstock, Farrell).

*Other Warblers*. The high for **Black-and-white Warblers** was 30 at Assateague on Sept. 12 (Hoffman). **American Redstarts** included 2 at Assateague on Aug. 8 (Hoffman), 50 at Point Lookout on Aug. 24 (Craig, Bishop), 50 near Nassawango on Sept. 2 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Farrell), over 25 at Tilghman Island on Sept. 5 (Reese), 50 at Assateague on Sept. 10 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Jett, Stasz), 16 at Rockburn Branch Park on Sept. 17 (Ott), and a female at Assateague on Oct. 22 (Hoffman). A **Worm-eating Warbler** was noted along Route 224 in Charles County on Sept. 12 (Jett), and an **Ovenbird** was at Tilghman Island on Aug. 21 (Reese). Mark Hoffman checked off a **Northern Waterthrush** at Assateague on Aug. 6 and **Louisiana Waterthrushes** included 1 at Assateague, an unusual location for this species, on Aug. 16 (Hoffman, O'Brien), and 2 at Swansfield in Columbia on Aug. 27 (Zeichner). A **Kentucky Warbler** was at Rockburn Branch Park on Sept. 17 (Ott), and another was at Greensboro on Sept. 27 (Hewitt). A **Connecticut Warbler** was reported at Turkey Point on Sept. 1 (Griffith, Gant), and single birds were

banded at Cherry Creek on Sept. 6, 13 and 14 (Skipper). Dobbins reported a Connecticut at Rock Creek Park on Sept 9, 10, 11 and 27, and 3 were reported in Howard County with 1 at Eden Brook on Sept. 11 (Farrell), 1 near Jennings Chapel Road on Sept. 17 (Wallace) and 1 at Gateway Business Park on Sept. 18 (Farrell, Solem). George Jett noted still another, an immature, at Myrtle Grove on Oct. 2. **Mourning Warblers** at Rock Creek Park were single sightings on Aug. 30 and Sept. 3, 19, and 20 (Dobbins), and another was at Washington Monument SP on Oct. 2 (Weesner). Twenty-one **Common Yellowthroats** were banded at Cherry Creek on Sept. 13 (Skipper), and 1 was at Loch Raven on Oct. 29 (Simon). Harry Armistead found an adult male **Hooded Warbler** at Bellevue on Sept. 11, and Jim Wilkinson checked off a **Canada Warbler** at Lake Elkhorn on Aug. 7. A late **Yellow-breasted Chat** was at Assateague on Oct. 22 (Hoffman).

*Tanagers, Cardinaline Finches.* A **Summer Tanager** was at Rock Creek Park on Sept. 1 (Dobbins), and at Rockburn Branch Park on Sept. 17 (Ott). A Summer Tanager was also at Assateague, an unusual location for this species, on Sept. 10 (Hoffman+). **Scarlet Tanagers** were a little late with 2 at Assateague on Oct. 16 (Hoffman, O'Brien+). An extraordinarily early **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**, an immature, was at Alesia on Aug. 7 (Ringler), and about 15 Rose-breasteds were at Point Lookout on Sept. 30 (Craig). **Blue Grosbeaks** included 3 at Schooley Mill Park on Oct. 12 (Ott, Zeichner), and a late bird at Assateague on Oct. 24 (Hoffman). Also late was the **Indigo Bunting** at Assateague on Nov. 5 (Hoffman). **Dickcissels** were seen or heard flying over Assateague from Aug. 16th through Sept. 30, with 2 on Sept. 10 (Hoffman, O'Brien+).

*Towhee, Sparrows, Snow Buntings.* Patty Craig estimated a hundred **Eastern Towhees** at Point Lookout on Oct. 11. A **Chipping Sparrow** was still at Tilghman Island on Nov. 13 (Reese), and 7 were at Blackwater on Nov. 20 (Armistead, Mills). **Clay-colored Sparrows** included singles at Assateague on Sept. 3, Sept. 18, and Oct. 28 (Hoffman+), at E.A. Vaughn WMA on Sept. 25 (Hoffman, Farrell), and at Schooley Mill Park on Oct. 8 (Ott, Solem). Three **Vesper Sparrows** were near Jennings Chapel Road in Howard County on Sept. 17 (Wallace). Vesper Sparrows were also at Assateague from Oct. 11-28 with 3 on Oct. 17 (Hoffman+), and 2 were at Ocean City on Oct. 12 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Farrell). An immature **Lark Sparrow** was at Assateague on Aug. 28 and Sept. 2 (Hoffman+), and a **Lark Bunting**, a very good find, was at Assateague on Sept. 5 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Farrell, Todd, Czaplak). **Savannah Sparrows** included 1 at Assateague on Aug. 31 (Hoffman, O'Brien), 30 there on Oct. 1 (Hoffman, O'Brien), and a high of 110 at UMCF on Oct. 14 (Ott). A **Grasshopper Sparrow** was at Mt. Pleasant on Oct. 23 (Ott), and one was banded for the season at Irvine on Oct. 28. **Fox Sparrows** arrived slightly early with 1 at Liberty Lake on Oct. 16, and 15 were at Hashawha on Nov. 12 (Ringler). Over 90 **Song Sparrows** were at Mt. Pleasant on Oct. 19 (Ott). Only 8 **Lincoln's Sparrows** were banded this season at Cherry Creek from Sept. 16 to Oct. 11 (Skipper). Other Lincoln's included 5 at Mt. Pleasant on Oct. 7 (Ott, Solem), and 1 at St. Jerome's Neck Road in Dameron on Oct. 24 (Craig). The total for **Swamp Sparrows** banded at Cherry Creek, Aug. 19 to Oct. 22, was 214 (Skipper). **White-crowned Sparrows** included an adult at Hains Point on Oct. 4 (Dobbins), 10 immatures at Assateague on Oct. 11 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Farrell), 4 immatures the same day at Point Lookout (Craig), and 40 birds at Mt. Pleasant on Oct. 19 (Ott, Solem). A **Snow Bunting** was at Bradenbaugh on Oct. 21 (Webb).

*Icterines.* Hoffman and O'Brien noted a **Bobolink** at Assateague on Oct. 11 and 2 were at UMCF on Oct. 14 (Ott). A migrant **Eastern Meadowlark** was at Rock Creek Park on Oct. 18 (Dobbins). Twenty **Rusty Blackbirds** were at Hughes Hollow on Oct. 11 (Bonham), and 35 were at Egypt Road near Blackwater on Nov. 19 (Armistead). Highs for **Boat-tailed Grackles** were 250 at Airport Road, Worcester County on Oct. 14 (Wilson), and 600 at Skimmer Island in Ocean City on Nov. 5 (Hoffman). **Baltimore Orioles**

included 2 at Blackwater on Sept. 24 (Armistead+), 30 at Assateague on Sept. 24 (Hoffman+), 1 at Assateague on Oct. 28 (Hoffman, Farrell), and 1 at Centennial on Nov. 9 (Farrell).

*Cardueline Finches.* A **Pine Siskin** was noted at Assateague on Oct. 11 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Farrell), and a male **House Sparrow**, very rare for the area, was there on Oct. 29 (Hoffman, Czaplak, Farrell, Todd).

*Corrigendum.* In the Fall 1993 report (Volume 51, Number 2), the authors erroneously included a male Surf Scoter at Triadelphia on November 28, 1993. The date and location are correct, but the bird was a male Oldsquaw (Farrell, Solem).

9763 Early Spring Way, Columbia, Maryland 21046

## WINTER DECEMBER 1, 1994 - FEBRUARY 28, 1995

**DANIEL R. SOUTHWORTH AND LINDA SOUTHWORTH**

This winter was milder than last, without the frequent ice storms, and with much more temperate weather in general. As a result there was no invasion of northern rarities like last winter, but there were several lingering migratory species.

*Observers:* Henry Armistead, John Bjerke, Rick Blom, Connie Bockstie, Larry Bonham, Carol and Don Broderick, Martha Chestem, Patty Craig, Bill Dobbins, Ethel Engle (reporting for Caroline County), Jane Farrell, Inez Glime, Marvin Hewitt, Mark Hoffman, Simone Jenion, George Jett, Ellen Lawler, Doug Lister, Nancy Magnusson, Mariana Nuttle, Mike O'Brien, Peter Osenton, Bonnie Ott, Jim Paulus, Elizabeth Pitney (reporting for the Wicomico Bird Club), Kyle Rambo, Jan Reese, Sue Ricciardi, Robert Ringler, Gene Scarpulla, Susan Setterberg, Steve Simon, Teresa Simons, Connie Skipper, Jo Solem (reporting for Howard County), Chris Swarth, Dave Webb, Dave Weesner, Jim Wilkinson, Erika Wilson, Helen Zeichner.

*Abbreviations:* CBC - Christmas Bird Count, DC - District of Columbia, NWR - National Wildlife Refuge, PRNAS - Patuxent River Naval Air Station (St. Mary's County), PWRC - Patuxent Wildlife Research Center (Prince George's County), SF -State Forest, SP - State Park, WMA - Wildlife Management Area, WS - Wildlife Sanctuary.

*Locations:* Place names (with counties in parentheses) not in the index of the State highway map: Alpha Ridge Landfill (Howard), Assateague Island (Worcester), Back River Waste Water Treatment Plant (Baltimore), Black Hill Park (Montgomery), Blackwater NWR (Dorchester), Browns Station Landfill (Prince George's), Fort Smallwood Park (Anne Arundel), Hains Point (DC), Hughes Hollow (Montgomery), Lake Elkhorn (Howard), Loch Raven (Baltimore), Patuxent River Park (Prince George's), Piney Run Park (Carroll), Sandy Point SP (Anne Arundel), Triadelphia Reservoir (Howard unless noted otherwise), Truitts Landing (Worcester), Town Hill (Allegany), Violettes Lock (Montgomery), Washington Monument SP (Washington unless noted otherwise).

*Loons, Grebes, Fulmars.* The high for **Red-throated Loons** was 3000 flying by Ocean City inlet on Dec. 4 (Hoffman, O'Brien+). Solo Red-throateds were in Oakland for

the CBC on Dec. 17 (Skipper+), at Sandy Point SP on Jan. 1 (Scarpulla), and at Havre de Grace from Jan. 28 to Feb. 3 (Webb). Single **Common Loons** were noted at Triadelphia Reservoir on Jan. 2 (Chestem, Zeichner), and at Hooper Island on Jan. 14 (Armistead); 4 were at Ocean City on Feb. 19 (Wilkinson). Steve Simon tallied 55 **Pied-billed Grebes** at Loch Raven on Dec. 4, and 27 were at Piney Run on Feb. 10 (Ringler). A far cry from last season, only single **Red-necked Grebes** were reported: at Denton on Dec. 7 (Hewitt), at Ocean City on Dec. 10 (Hoffman), at PRNAS on Jan. 28 (Rambo), and at Ocean City on Feb. 25 (Bjerke). Five **Northern Fulmars** were checked off during a pelagic trip out of Ocean City on Feb. 26 (Hoffman, Brian Patteson+).

**Gannets, Pelicans, Cormorants.** The coastal high for **Northern Gannets** was 1000 flying by Ocean City inlet on Dec. 4 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Czaplak, Todd, Farrell). An adult gannet was at PRNAS on Jan. 23 (Rambo), and 274 were listed on the pelagic trip from Ocean City on Feb. 26 (Patteson+). A **Brown Pelican** was noted at Ocean City on Dec. 4 (Hoffman+) and Jan. 22 (Jenion). Ocean City remains a consistent spot for winter **Great Cormorants** with 1 on Dec. 3-4, and an adult and an immature present from Dec. 9 (Hoffman, Jett+) into mid-February (Wilkinson+). An immature was also discovered at Sandy Point on Jan. 1 (Scarpulla). **Double-crested Cormorants** included 1 at Conowingo on Dec. 30 (Webb), 14 on the Patuxent River from God's Grace Point to Patuxent View, Calvert County on Jan. 15 (Ringler, Stasz), 1 in a pond at Sparrows Point, Baltimore County on Jan. 27 (Wilkinson), 3 at Ocean City on Jan. 28 (Hoffman), and 3 at Centennial on Feb. 24 (Bockstie).

**Herons, Egrets.** Inez Glime reported about 75 **Great Blue Herons** at the rookery near Federalsburg on Feb. 25. A **Great Egret** was checked off the DC CBC on Dec. 17 near Oxon Run (Paul DuMont), 2 were at Blackwater NWR on Jan. 2 (Ringler), and 1 was at Sparrows Point Pond on Jan. 27 (Wilkinson). Three **Snowy Egrets** were noted at Deal Island WMA on Feb. 3 (Lawler), with 1 still there on Feb. 24 (Bonham). **Tricolored Herons** were also found at this location: 1 on Feb. 3 and 4 on Feb. 26 (Lawler). A **Cattle Egret** was discovered at Blackwater on Dec. 10 (Farrell, Solem), and 3 were tallied on the Ocean City CBC in the Newark area on Dec. 29 with 1 still present on Jan. 14 (Hoffman). Dave Webb reported a **Green Heron** at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds on Jan. 28. Harry Armistead counted 9 **Black-crowned Night-Herons** at Elliott Island on Feb. 18.

**Swans, Geese.** An exotic **Black Swan** was found on Feb. 26 at Deal Island WMA (Lawler), where one had been seen in January of 1990 (Rick Blom). Two **Tundra Swans** were noted inland at Greenbrier SP on Jan. 26 (Weesner), and another was on the river at Oldtown on Jan. 28 (Paulus, Simons). Also pretty far inland was the **Mute Swan** listed at Oakland on the Dec. 17 CBC (Skipper+). Dobbins found a **Greater White-fronted Goose** at Bristol on Dec. 7, another was in the Pocomoke City area from Dec. 28 through Feb. 25 (Hoffman, Ringler), and another was at Blackwater on Jan. 12 (Bonham). Highs for **Snow Geese** included 12,000 at Jenkins Pond, Worcester County on Dec. 9 (Hoffman, O'Brien); 200 of the white morphs flying over Conowingo Dam on Jan. 14 (Scarpulla); 3500, including 1600 blues at Blackwater on Jan. 14 (Armistead); and 750 of the white race flying over the Cecil County landfill on Jan. 21 (Scarpulla). A **Ross' Goose** was identified this season at Snow Hill on Jan. 22 (Hoffman). About 715 **Canada Geese**, including two of the small race, were at Bellevue on Jan. 13; 425 were there on Feb. 19 (Armistead). Ringler checked off 3000 at Piney Run on Feb. 4, including a family of 5 small race birds, 1 of the small race in a flock of Snows near Queen Anne on Feb. 12, and a total of 5000 at Piney Run on Feb. 13.

**Puddle Ducks.** The drake **Wood Duck**, enamored with a female Mallard and seen for several seasons, was present again this winter at Lake Elkhorn (Wilkinson+), and

another adult male was with a female Mallard for the second year at Choptank (D. Ford). Other Wood Ducks were 8 at Truitts Landing on Jan. 1 (Hoffman, O'Brien), 4 at North Branch on Jan. 14 (Paulus, Simons), 2 pairs at Irish Grove WS on Jan. 22 (Lawler), and a female on the Potomac at Cumberland on Jan. 29 (Ringler, Simons). Four hundred **American Black Ducks** were at Assateague on Jan. 28, and 1200 **Mallards** were at West Ocean City on Dec. 10 (Hoffman). Connie Skipper found 13 **Northern Pintails** at Deep Creek Lake on Dec. 14, and Harry Armistead tallied 950 at Blackwater on Feb. 18. Jane Farrell and Jo Solem had a nice winter sighting of 2 female **Blue-winged Teals** at Elliott Drive pond in Howard County on Dec. 11, and 9 Blue-wingeds were at Elliott Island on Feb. 18 (Armistead). Steve Simon totaled up 31 **Gadwalls** at Loch Raven on Dec. 21, and a **Gadwall/Mallard hybrid** was at Bellevue on Jan. 13 (Armistead). There were 353 **American Wigeons** at Loch Raven on Dec. 6 (Simon), and Dave Harvey discovered a male **European Wigeon** at Piney Run on Feb. 19.

*Diving Ducks.* Two thousand **Canvasbacks** were at Buena Vista, Calvert County on Jan. 15 (Ringler, Stasz). Other Canvasbacks were 500+ at Choptank on Jan. 17 (D. Ford), 745 at Bellevue on Feb. 19 (Armistead), and 150 in Leonardtown on Feb. 22 (Craig). **Redheads** included 8 at Piney Run on Dec. 25 (Ringler), 60 at Loch Raven on Jan. 6 (Simon), 8 at Kent Narrows on Feb. 12 (Weesner, Ricciardi), and a pair in St. Mary's City on Feb. 18 (Craig). High reports for **Ring-necked Ducks** were 1290 at Loch Raven on Dec. 6 (Simon), and 300 at Ocean Pines on Dec. 10 (Hoffman). Two male **Greater Scaups** were identified at Piney Run on Dec. 11 (Ringler), an immature male or female was at Centennial from Jan. 28 (Farrell, Solem) through Feb. 11 (Mike Leumas, Mary Jo and Robert Betts), and a male was at Piney Run on Jan. 29 (Ringler). An immature male **Common Eider** was at the Ocean City inlet on Dec. 3 (Hoffman+), and 2 immature males were noted there by several birders from Dec. 9 through Jan. 28 (Hoffman, O'Brien+). Either an adult female or a juvenile Common Eider was seen off Cedar Point, St. Mary's County on Feb. 13 (Rambo, Lister). Two drake **Harlequin Ducks** were spotted at Ocean City on Dec. 3 (Hoffman, Jett+), and a female had joined them by Dec. 9 (Hoffman, O'Brien). Up to five Harlequins were noted at Ocean City by several birders from Dec. 26 (Hoffman, O'Brien) through Feb. 25 (Bjerke). Two **Oldsquaws** were found inland at Triadelphia on Dec. 11 (Farrell, Solem), and 550 were way out on the Choptank at Bellevue on Feb. 17 (Armistead). At Ocean City there were 50 **Black Scoters** on Dec. 9 (Hoffman, O'Brien), and 200 **Surf Scoters** on Dec. 3 and Dec. 9 (Hoffman+). **Common Mergansers** included 120 at Blackwater on Feb. 18 (Armistead), the high in Howard County of 125 at Triadelphia on Feb. 25 (Solem), and 3 at Choptank on Feb. 26 (D. Ford).

*Diurnal Raptors.* **Black Vultures** of note were 35 near Monument Road in Frederick County on Dec. 10 (Weesner), 1 flying over Haystack Mountain in Allegany County on Jan. 3 (Paulus, Simons), and 41 at Harwood on Jan. 5 (Reese). An **Osprey** was located during the DC CBC on Dec. 17 (Steve Pretl, Janet Millenson), another was near the Bay Bridge on Feb. 7 (Al Haury), and 1 was at Denton on Feb. 17 (Chris Dorset). Bob Ringler identified 3 different inland **Bald Eagles** for the season at Piney Run. A Bald Eagle was located during the Oakland CBC on Dec. 17 (Skipper+), and an adult was at Liberty Reservoir on Jan. 10 (Denton Gosnell). An immature **Northern Goshawk** was reported at the Cecil County landfill on Dec. 17 (Scarpulla, Blom). **Red-tailed Hawks** included 26 at Tilghman Island on Dec. 4 (Reese). The partial albino Red-tailed seen for several years in Howard County was once again reported this season in woods near the power line west of Brown's Bridge Road (Wilkinson). Another albinistic buteo, probably an immature Red-tailed, was at Blackwater on Feb. 20 (Dobbins). A light-phase **Rough-legged Hawk** was noted at Centennial Lane in Howard County on Dec. 11 (Darius and Paula Ecker), in east Columbia near Stanford Road on Jan. 12 and Jan. 20 (Farrell), and at Route 100 and Route 29 on Feb. 14 (Bockstie). Other Rough-leggeds were 1 at Massey

on Jan. 11 (Bonham), an adult at St. Mary's County Airport on Feb. 4 (Rambo), and one or two birds at Jug Bay, Feb. 8-15 (Chris Swarth, Kathy Lambert). A sub-adult **Golden Eagle** was at Blackwater on Dec. 9 (Dobbins) and Dec. 27 (Bonham), and an adult and an immature were seen flying over Green Ridge Road, Allegany County on Jan. 14 (Paulus, Simons). The high for **American Kestrels** was 27 at PRNAS on Feb. 23 (Rambo). Solo **Merlin** sightings were made at Greensboro on Dec. 21 (Hewitt), at Pomonkey Creek, Charles County on Dec. 24 (Jett), at Figg's Landing, Worcester County on Dec. 26 (Hoffman, O'Brien), in east Columbia near Stanford Road on Jan. 4 (Farrell), off Pindell School Road in Howard County the same day (Dave and Maureen Harvey), and chasing Sanderlings at PRNAS on Jan. 23 (Rambo). **Peregrine Falcons** were an adult at Ocean City on Jan. 2 (Ringler) and Jan. 21 (Jett), an adult flying over Route 50 about 10 miles east of the Bay Bridge on Feb. 9 (Lawler), and 1 in eastern Columbia near Stanford Road on Feb. 10 (Farrell).

*Turkeys, Rails, Coots, Sandhill Crane.* A nice sighting of 16 **Wild Turkeys** was made near Henry's Crossroad, Dorchester County on Jan. 14 (Armistead), and 10 were at Liberty Reservoir on Feb. 14 (J.B. Yelton, Sam Hughes). Mark Hoffman and Mike O'Brien notched 6 **Virginia Rails** at Truitts Landing on Jan. 1. High counts for the **American Coot** were 1260 at Loch Raven on Dec. 26 (Simon), 400 at Piney Run on Jan. 21 (Ringler), and over 900 at Deal Island WMA on Feb. 22 (Brodericks). A **Sandhill Crane** was reported on Back River Neck from late November through Dec. 7 (many obs.).

*Plovers, Sandpipers, Phalaropes, Skua.* Hoffman and O'Brien tallied 180 **Black-bellied Plovers** at Downs Road, Worcester County on Dec. 26. Interesting **Greater Yellowlegs** were 4 on the DC CBC on Dec 17 (DuMont, Abbott), 1 at Blackwater on Jan. 2 (Ringler), 3 at Ocean City on Jan. 15 (Hoffman, Czaplak, Todd), 5 at Deal Island WMA on Feb. 24 (Bonham), and 3 there on Feb. 26 (Lawler). Five **Lesser Yellowlegs** were at Pomonkey Creek, Charles County on Dec. 24 (Jett), and a **Red Knot** was at Ocean City through Jan. 28 (Wicomico Bird Club). There were 42 **Sanderlings** at Hooper Island on Feb. 18 (Armistead), 2 **Western Sandpipers** at Ocean City on Jan. 1 (Hoffman), and a **Purple Sandpiper** was at Point Lookout SP on Dec. 20 (Craig, Jim and Bob Boxwell, Marty Cribb). **Dunlins** included 2 at Tilghman Island on Dec. 4 (Reese) and 1235 at Hooper Island on Feb. 18 (Armistead). A **Common Snipe** was found at Pinto Marsh on Jan. 28 (Paulus, Simons), and another was at Lilypons on Feb. 2 (Bonham). Two **Red Phalaropes** were notched on the Feb. 26 pelagic trip out of Ocean City along with a **Great Skua** (Patteson+).

*Gulls.* An adult **Yellow-legged Gull** has been documented for what would be the first Howard County record. The bird was reported at Alpha Ridge landfill on Feb. 11 (Scarpulla). **Laughing Gulls** of note were 2 at Tilghman Island on Dec. 4 (Reese), 2 at Laytonsville on Dec. 5 (Jett), 55 at Back River on Dec. 4 (Scarpulla), 1 at Ocean City on Dec. 30 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Czaplak, Todd, Farrell), and 4 in winter plumage at West Ocean City on Feb. 11 (Lawler). Once again **Little Gulls** were sighted at Ocean City with 1 on Jan. 5 (Brodericks), a first-winter on Jan. 14 (Hoffman), 2 adults on Jan. 19 and 21 (Brodericks, Hoffman, Jett, Dobbins+), and 1 on Jan. 22 (Farrell, Todd, Czaplak). An adult **Black-headed Gull** was sorted out at Conowingo Dam on Dec. 11 (Scarpulla+), and seen by many through Jan. 28. **Bonaparte's Gulls** included 9 on Dec. 11 at Triadelphia (Farrell, Solem), 1 in full breeding plumage at Back River on Dec. 31 (Scarpulla, Ralph Cullison), and again on Jan. 8 (Scarpulla, Shireen Gonzaga), 3 at Centennial on Feb. 5 (Farrell, Solem), and 13 at Hooper Island on Feb. 18 (Armistead). **Ring-billed Gulls** included 33 inland at Rocky Gap SP on Jan. 12 (Paulus, Simons). An adult-winter **California Gull** was reported at Conowingo on Jan. 28 (Scarpulla, Blom, Fogleman). Highs for **Herring Gulls** were 1500 near Pine Beach on Dec. 14 (Reese), 4000 at the Worcester County landfill on Dec. 26 (Hoffman, O'Brien), and 18,000 at Conowingo Dam on Jan. 14

(Scarpulla, Blom). Popular Conowingo yielded an adult-winter **Thayer's Gull** on Dec. 11 that was seen through Feb. 20 (Scarpulla, Blom, Fogleman), and a first-winter Thayer's on Dec. 28 (Scarpulla). For even more variety at Conowingo, a second-winter **Iceland Gull** was recorded from Dec. 11 through Feb. 20 (Scarpulla+). Other Icelanders were a third-winter bird at the Cecil County landfill on Dec. 17 (Scarpulla, Blom), a juvenile on the Washington DC CBC on Dec. 17 (Bob Abrams, Joan Boudreau), a second-winter at Worcester County landfill on Dec. 26 (Hoffman, O'Brien), a first-winter at Georgetown Reservoir on Jan. 6 (Dobbins+), a first-winter at Laytonsville landfill on Jan. 14 (Ringler, Farrell, Solem), a second-winter at Browns Station landfill on Jan. 28 (Ricciardi), an adult winter at Conowingo on Jan. 28 (Scarpulla, Blom, Fogleman), 2 first-winter and 1 second-winter at Alpha Ridge on Feb. 11 (Scarpulla, Cullison), a second-winter there on Feb. 18 (Scarpulla, Harold Fogleman+), and a first-winter at Conowingo on Feb. 20 (Scarpulla). Numerous **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** included 4 at Georgetown Reservoir on Jan. 1 (Dobbins), 2 adults and 2 third-winter birds at Laytonsville on Jan. 14 (Ringler), 3 adults at Fulton Pond in Howard County on Jan. 16 (Farrell), an adult at Northern Landfill near Westminster on Jan. 21 (Ringler, Dave Smith), an adult and a first-winter bird at Ocean City on Jan. 21 (Hoffman), an adult at Point Lookout on Jan. 21 (Craig), an adult at PRNAS on Jan. 23 (Rambo), up to 3 birds at Alpha Ridge from Jan. 28 (Magnusson, Solem) through Feb. 18 (Scarpulla+), an adult at Hooper Island on Feb. 18 (Armistead), an adult at Choptank on Feb. 18 (D. Ford, Steve Ford), an adult at Ocean City on Feb. 18 (Alex Hammer), a second-winter on the Ocean City pelagic trip on Feb. 26 (Patteson+), and 3 adults and a first-winter at Browns Station on Jan. 28 (Ricciardi). It was a good winter for finding **Glaucous Gulls** with 1 at Ocean City on Dec. 4 (Farrell), a first-year bird at Laytonsville on Dec. 5 (Jett), a first-winter at Ocean City on Dec. 29 (Scarpulla), a first-winter at West Ocean City from Dec. 30-Feb. 18 (Hoffman+), a second-winter at Georgetown Reservoir on Jan. 1 (Dobbins, Dave Sibley+), a first-winter bird at Ocean City, Jan. 21—Feb. 11 (Hoffman, Armisteads, Lawler), a first-winter in Howard County at Alpha Ridge on Jan. 28 (Solem, Magnusson) seen again on Feb. 18 (Scarpulla+), and an adult at Conowingo Dam on Feb. 13 (Scarpulla, Fogleman). High counts of **Great Black-backed Gulls** were 489 at the Cecil County landfill on Dec. 17 (Scarpulla, Blom), 90 at Alpha Ridge on Jan. 28 (Solem, Magnusson), and 500-600 on the ice sheet at Choptank on Feb. 18 (D. Ford, Steve Ford).

**Kittiwakes, Terns, Alcids.** Ocean City hosted **Black-legged Kittiwakes** with one, covered with oil, noted on Dec. 16 (Hoffman, Dyke,+). Others at this location were an adult and an immature on Jan. 1 (Farrell, Todd, Czaplak), 2 immatures on Jan. 15 (Hoffman, Czaplak, Todd), and 2 adults on Jan 22 (Farrell, Todd, Czaplak). Three **Royal Terns** were noted at Ocean City on Dec. 4 (Hoffman, O'Brien, Czaplak, Todd, Farrell). **Forster's Terns** included 400 at Ocean City on Dec. 3 (Hoffman), 10 at Tilghman Island on Dec. 4 (Reese), and 2 at Assateague on Jan. 28 (Hoffman). Forty-six **Dovekies** were identified on the Feb. 26 pelagic trip from Ocean City. Other pelagic sightings were a **Common Murre** on the Feb. 25 trip, 2 **Thick-billed Murres** on the Feb. 26 trip, 12 **Razorbills** on the Feb. 25 trip and 7 on the Feb. 26 trip, 19 **Atlantic Puffins** on the Feb. 26 trip, and 7 unidentified alcids on the Feb. 26 trip (Patteson+).

**Owls, Hummingbirds, Flycatchers, Swallows.** A **Snowy Owl** was a nice surprise at Hart-Miller in Baltimore during the Harbor CBC on Dec. 31 (Ricciardi), and single **Long-eared Owls** were discovered in St. Mary's County on Dec. 10 (Craig), and at Assateague on Dec. 29-30 (Iliiff+). **Short-eared Owls** included 1 at Georges Island Landing on Dec. 22 (Farrell, Todd, Czaplak), 2 at Hooper Island on Jan. 14 (Armistead), about 8 near Taneytown on Jan. 21 (Blom) that were seen again on Jan. 29 (Ringler), 3 at George Island Landing on Jan. 22 (Hoffman), and 1 at Alpha Ridge on Feb. 11 (Cullison, Scarpulla), and Feb. 18 (Scarpulla, Solem+). Two **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were at Assateague

on Dec. 3 (Hoffman, Czaplak, Todd, Farrell), and 1 was there on Jan. 1-2 (Hoffman+). Two **Rufous Hummingbirds** visited the home of Mike and Ruth Gray in Salisbury, Dec. 24-26 (Pitney+). Eleven **Eastern Phoebes** were in the Stockton area on Dec. 28 (Hoffman), and another was at Denton on Jan. 27 (Hewitt). **Ash-throated Flycatchers** reportedly visited Maryland this season with 1 at Blackwater on Dec. 9 (Dobbins), and 1 at PRNAS from Dec. 18 through early January (Stasz, Lister, Iliff, Jett+). **Tree Swallows** included 30 at Assateague on Dec. 3 (Hoffman, Czaplak, Todd, Farrell), and 1 there on Jan. 1 (Farrell, Todd, Czaplak). The high for **Fish Crows** was 635 at the Cecil County landfill on Dec. 17 (Scarpulla, Blom); another was heard at North Branch on Jan. 28 (Paulus, Simons).

*Corvids, Nuthatches, Wrens, Creepers, Kinglets.* A **Common Raven** was in a field near Lilypons on Feb. 11 (Ringler, Wilkinson). Three **Brown-headed Nuthatches** were at Great Mills, St. Mary's County on Jan. 17 (Craig). The hard-to-find **Sedge Wren** was present this winter, with 1 at Assateague on Jan. 1 (Farrell, Todd, Czaplak), 3 at Truitts Landing the same day (Hoffman, O'Brien), 3 at Assateague on Jan. 14 (Hoffman), and 1 at Georges Island Landing on Jan. 22 (Hoffman). Also at Assateague was a **Marsh Wren** on Jan. 1 (Farrell, Todd, Czaplak). Reports for **Brown Creepers** were lacking and Bob Ringler commented that there were incredibly few this winter, and that **Golden-crowned Kinglet** numbers were poor as well; numbers for the **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** were good, however.

*Thrushes, Mimids.* Dave Webb observed a **Hermit Thrush** feeding in a field with some Juncos at Aberdeen on Feb. 18. **American Robins** were plentiful throughout the period with large numbers apparently still migrating south through January (Ringler+). Highs for the robin were 600 at Vienna on Dec. 13, over 2000 at Easton on Jan. 20, and 550 at California and over 1000 at Easton on Feb. 12 (Reese). Bonnie Ott noted 130 in her yard near Ellicott City on Feb. 28. Two **Gray Catbirds** were at Sycamore Landing on Jan. 11 (Dobbins), and another was at Bellevue on Jan. 13 (Armistead). **Brown Thrashers** this season were 1 at Denton on Feb. 4 (Nuttle), 3 at Rockburn Branch Park on Feb. 11 (Ott), and 1 at Bellevue on Feb. 19 (Armistead).

*Pipits, Shrikes, Vireos.* Highs for **American Pipits** were about 100 in St. Mary's County off Cornfield Harbor Road on Dec. 15th and 20th (Craig), 65 at Jasontown, Carroll County on Jan. 21 (Ringler), and 40 at McCoole, Allegany County on Jan. 28 (Ringler, Bill Kulp, Jr.). **Northern Shrikes** noted were 1 at Accident-Bittinger Road, Garrett County on Dec. 17 (Kevin Dodge), 1 at Brighton Dam, Montgomery County on Dec. 17 during the Triadelphia CBC (Hoffman+), and again on Dec. 18 (Hoffman, O'Brien), and 1 near Cranesville Swamp on Feb. 3 (Ken Bauer). A **Loggerhead Shrike** was seen at Lilypons on Feb. 11 (Ringler). A **Solitary Vireo** was at Pocomoke SF on Jan. 2 (Ringler+).

*Warblers.* Two **Audubon's Warblers** were in the South Point area of Worcester County, Dec. 26 (Blom+) through Jan. 22 (Harry and George Armistead). Two **Pine Warblers** were singing at Blades Road, Worcester County on Jan. 14 (Hoffman), and 2 were noted in a yard in Salisbury, Jan. 25-29 (Lawler). A **Palm Warbler**, a western, was still at George Jett's house in Waldorf on Jan. 1. A **Common Yellowthroat** was discovered near Browns Station landfill on Jan. 21 and another at the Horsehead Wetlands Center on Feb. 12 (Ricciardi). Single **Wilson's Warblers** were near Anacostia on the DC CBC on Dec. 17 (Peter Staub, Rusty Wilson) and at Conowingo on Jan. 21 (Weesner, Webb), and a **Yellow-breasted Chat** was found at Tuckahoe SP during the Denton CBC on Dec. 17 (Ricciardi). As last winter, a male **Painted Bunting** visited Berlin, present from Jan. 19 to Feb. 14 (Mary Humphreys+).

*Sparrows, Icterines.* **Chipping Sparrows** included 2 at Mt. Pleasant, Howard County on Dec. 2 (Ott, Solem, Setterberg), 1 at Alpha Ridge on Dec. 16 (Solem, Ott), 75 in the

South Point area of Worcester County on Dec. 30 (Hoffman+), and 2 at feeders in Parsonsburg from Jan. 29 into February (Pitney). The high for **Savannah Sparrows** was 12 at Mt. Pleasant on Dec. 2 (Ott, Solem, Setterberg). A partial albino **Fox Sparrow** was discovered at Back River on Dec. 31 (Scarpulla, Cullison), and 12 Fox Sparrows were at Kinder Park in Pasadena on Jan. 3 (Ricciardi). **White-crowned Sparrows** included a nice count of 65 at Mt. Pleasant on Dec. 16 (Ott, Solem). Six **Lapland Longspurs** were near Lilypons on Feb. 11 (Wilkinson). Reports for **Snow Buntings** were 25 at Sandy Point SP on Dec. 11 (Ricciardi), 26 at Assateague on Dec. 30 (Hoffman+), 40 at Sandy Point SP on Jan. 1 (Scarpulla), 1 at Iron Mountain, Allegany County on Jan. 9 (Paulus, Simons), 6 at PRNAS on Jan. 28 and 10 there on Jan. 31 (Rambo), and 1 at Claggett Center, Frederick County on Feb. 8 (Bonham). An adult **Red-winged Blackbird** was noted on the Feb. 26 pelagic trip about 40 miles out from Ocean City (Patteson, N. Brinkley, O'Brien, Hoffman+). About 100 **Rusty Blackbirds** were at Sycamore Landing on Dec. 3 (Bonham). A male **Boat-tailed Grackle** was noted at Hooper Island on Jan. 14 (Armistead), and 2 were discovered in Hollywood on Feb. 18 (Rambo).

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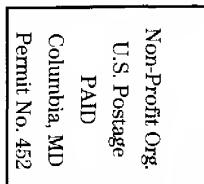
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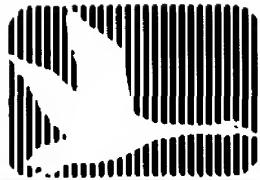
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**Cover:** White-throated Sparrow at Stockton Maryland, December 1991  
Photo by Mark L. Hoffman



## WATERFOWL USE OF COASTAL PONDS

**JOHN V. DENNIS**

A comparatively recent phenomenon is the overwintering of waterfowl in beach resort ponds and lagoons along the Middle Atlantic coast. Since 1990, I have been visiting some of these resort impoundments each winter near Ocean City, Maryland, and in nearby Delaware, listing water birds seen and their numbers. A somewhat similar study was conducted at Beach Haven West, a suburban lagoon development on filled marshland near Atlantic City, New Jersey (Figley and Vandruff 1974).

In my study, I looked at seasonal use, length of stay, effects of feeding, and harm done, if any. In regard to harmful effects, these range from purported damage to residential lawns and grass areas of golf courses to getting in the way of people.

Safe in their suburban sanctuaries, waterfowl of several species are building up non-migratory populations that are not subject to hunting pressure. It is these populations that need to be watched from the standpoint of conflicts with human interests. Problems vary greatly from one resort to another.

### **VIRGINIA BEACH**

I am indebted to Dan Arris for information about waterfowl feeding and problems related to this in the Virginia Beach area. He conducts a year-round feeding program in a residential area where he lives on the Lynnhaven River, a saltwater arm of Chesapeake Bay. From his waterfront home, he tosses out as much as 6,500 lbs of whole corn a year. He throws most of the corn into shallow water where it is retrieved by no fewer than 17 species of waterfowl. These include sizable numbers of Canada Geese, Mallards, American Black Ducks, Wood Ducks, Hooded Mergansers, and Canvasbacks. He points out that puddle ducks, including the American Black Duck and Mallard, will dive for corn in water that is anywhere from two to six feet in depth. In order to prevent Mallards from eating corn meant for slower and less dexterous Canada Geese, he built a feeder that keeps the corn off the ground and out of the reach of Mallards.

Although generous in his feeding efforts, Mr. Arris is concerned about a burgeoning resident Canada Goose population in Virginia Beach. With few predators and freedom from hunting pressure, they have reached a population level of around 100,000. They are a nuisance on golf courses and he says that some of them even chase him and his dog!

### PONDS NEAR OCEAN CITY

Elliott's Pond in West Ocean City, Maryland, is the place to go for a large variety of waterfowl, shorebirds, large wading birds, and others. Well known to birders, it has produced such non-waterfowl species as all three egrets, both night-herons, Great Blue Heron, Little Blue Heron, Black Skimmer, Osprey, and Common Moorhen. I began checking the pond for waterfowl in February 1994. Some of my high counts were 90 Tundra Swans (December 1994), 800 Canada Geese (October 1995), 200 Mallards (December 1994 and 1995), 1,300 Canvasbacks (January 1996), and 15 Ruddy Ducks (February 1994).

The pond covers about 40 acres and apparently is fed entirely by rainfall; consequently there is considerable seasonal variation in the water level. Although in a residential neighborhood, homes are well back from the pond. Willows and other woody plants surround the pond. The pond itself contains a wide variety of aquatic plants, some of them serving as food for waterfowl. Fish and other small forms of animal life add to the food supply. Partly because the shoreline is largely inaccessible and in private hands, there is little, if any, waterfowl feeding. But good views of the pond and its birdlife can be obtained from the edge of a paved road on the pond's east side.

In sharp contrast to Elliott's Pond are the ponds at Ocean Pines, a large residential development to the north of West Ocean City, reached by way of Maryland highway 113. A freshwater pond of about 50 acres lies adjacent to the south entrance to Ocean Pines, and two small ponds of less than an acre lie adjacent to the north entrance.

The pond at the south entrance is somewhat irregular in shape and bounded on the west by a grassy slope and the main highway. Woodland alternating with open areas lines the rest of the pond. A driveway at the east side of the pond provides easy access to persons wishing to have closer contact with the waterfowl.

I began visiting the Ocean Pines ponds in March 1990. The large pond at what is called the South Gate has yielded a wide variety of waterfowl and other waterbirds. Besides native waterfowl, there is a year-round population of domestic species that can be attributed to releases by residents of Ocean Pines. The small ponds at the North Gate have yielded only a few Canada Geese, Mallards, and one Pekin Duck.

Abundant food supplies—both natural food and handouts from residents—have been a factor in making the large pond attractive to waterfowl. However, numbers recorded for most species have been lower than at Elliott's Pond.

My higher counts were 200 Canada Geese (December 1994), 60 Mallards (January 1996), 150 Canvasbacks (February 1994), 40 Ring-necked Ducks (December 1994), 60 Hooded Mergansers (December 1994), and 65 American Coots (March 1995).

There has been a stable population of between 45 and 50 domestic geese ever since the counts were initiated. The domestic stock seems to include strains of both the domestic Chinese Goose and the Graylag Goose. Close to 20 Pekin Ducks have been recorded and one Muscovy Duck. Anywhere from 10 to 15 hybrids representing

mixtures of Mallards, American Black Ducks, and Pekin Ducks have been present on all counts.

Recorded among non-waterfowl species were Pied-billed and Red-necked Grebes, Double-crested Cormorants, Great Blue Heron, Osprey, and Belted Kingfisher. As many as 15 Double-crested Cormorants were seen in March 1996. The presence of so many fish-eating birds is evidence that the pond is well stocked with fish. Gulls were present on all visits. Here, as at other ponds, they functioned primarily as scavengers, often feeding on food offerings meant for waterfowl.

Heavy feeding by residents of Ocean Pines has led to a scramble by domestic geese to every car that pulls up to park where waterfowl feeding is conducted. First to come, and sometimes tugging at one's clothing with their bills, are the domestic geese. They are quickly followed by Pekin Ducks, Mallards, and American Coots. Last to arrive are Canada Geese, which straggle in to claim a share. If bread or other bakery products are offered, gulls arrive overhead, screaming and coming down to seize the food before the others can get it. Not contesting for the food are Canvasbacks, Ring-necked Ducks, Hooded Mergansers, and occasional Greater Snow Geese.

Aside from crowding around people and slowing traffic on nearby Ocean Pines roadways, the waterfowl present few problems to residents. Homes are far enough away so that lawns are not trampled or contaminated with droppings.

### **REHOBETH BEACH, DELAWARE**

Approximately 20 miles north of Ocean City is the ocean resort community of Rehobeth Beach. Well known to bird watchers for its waterfowl and colony of Monk Parakeets, the resort city has three ponds or lakes within its corporate limits. All are heavily used by waterfowl. Silver Lake, a freshwater body that covers about 60 acres, lies adjacent to the ocean at the southern edge of the community; Spring Lake, only a few acres in extent, lies inland from Silver Lake; and Greer Lake, another freshwater body, lies to the north adjacent to the ocean. Irregularly shaped, it covers about 25 acres.

I began visiting Silver Lake in April 1990. Most of its perimeter is bordered by nice homes with lawns and shade trees. In places there are stands of common reed (*Phragmites communis*). The lake can be viewed from lakeside drives, but parking is restricted; property surrounding the lake is in private hands.

My high counts for Silver Lake include 500 Canada Geese (December 1992 and 1994), 90 Mallards (January 1996), 330 American Black Ducks (December 1995), and 460 Canvasbacks (March 1994). Recorded among non-waterfowl species were Horned and Red-necked Grebes, 150 Double-crested Cormorants (November 1995), and Great Blue Herons. Aside from two Pekin Ducks, no exotic waterfowl were recorded. Gulls were plentiful.

Several of the residents invite waterfowl to their yards by offering generous amounts of grain. Mallards and American Black Ducks fly in as soon as food is available. Only if food is offered at the edge of the lake will Canada Geese and Canvasbacks respond.

Not until January 1995 was I aware of Spring Lake. Wholly within the limits of a housing development, it is surrounded by lawns and recently built homes. A

good variety of waterfowl frequent the lake. High counts include 225 Canada Geese (January 1995), 35 Mallards (December 1995), 42 American Black Ducks (January 1996), 55 Shovelers (December 1995), and 235 Canvasbacks (January 1995). Gadwalls, American Widgeons, Ring-necked Ducks, Buffleheads, Ruddy Ducks, and Pekin Ducks round out the list of waterfowl visitors. Very little waterfowl feeding is conducted at Spring Lake.

The third of the Rehobeth Beach lakes is Greer Lake, which, unlike the others, is a public park. An eastern arm extends close enough to the ocean so that it is subject to receiving salt water during heavy seas. This arm, as well as a northern arm and the main body of water, throng with waterfowl the year round. A sign erected by the town reads, "Leash Dogs to Protect Waterfowl."

I began visiting Greer Lake in April 1990. Since there is easy access to the public, I had no trouble viewing the waterfowl. My high counts include 385 Canada Geese (December 1992), 500 Mallards (December and March 1992), and 50 American Black Ducks (November 1993). No Canvasbacks were recorded, but of other native waterfowl there were a few Greater Snow Geese, Gadwalls, Northern Shovelers, Northern Pintails, and American Coots. Exotic waterfowl were represented by between 20 and 35 domestic geese, as many as 10 Pekin Ducks, and as many as 5 Muscovy Ducks. The only other waterbird recorded was a Horned Grebe in January 1996.

Residents offer so much food in the form of grain and bakery products that on some days the waterfowl seem satiated and barely respond. As at Ocean Pines, exotic waterfowl are the first to come, and, not far behind, the Mallards.

Lawn areas at the perimeter of the lake are heavily trampled and contaminated by droppings left by the waterfowl. Here, as at the other ponds and lakes, the waterfowl come ashore to loaf and graze. They scarcely get out of the way when people walk along the shoreline. This is particularly true of the resident species. Migratory waterfowl, that arrive for the winter, tend to be more wary.

## DISCUSSION

Regardless of size, salinity, proximity to the ocean, and habitat, the bodies of water treated in this study were well utilized by waterfowl. Some species, however, were found only at some of the water areas and not at others. The Canvasback, for example, was found in good numbers at Silver Lake and Spring Lake in Rehobeth Beach, but not at nearby Greer Lake. The Hooded Merganser was found only at the large Ocean Pines lake. Several waterfowl species, including the Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, Blue-winged Teal, American Widgeon, and scaup sp. were rarely represented. Do these species normally require larger bodies of water?

Another question is whether feeding by residents attracts more waterfowl than otherwise would be the case. Comparing bodies of water where waterfowl were fed with those where they were not, it was discovered that there were no marked differences in numbers and variety between them. But the Mallard, a comparatively recent arrival in the East, seems somewhat dependent upon artificial feeding. This was shown to be true in the Northeast (Heusmann 1988).

Unquestionably, feeding is an important factor in the survival of exotic species. Only at bodies of water where extensive feeding was conducted were there sizeable numbers of domestic geese, Muscovy Ducks, and Pekin Ducks. The practice by residents of releasing these species should be discouraged. Not only do the exotic birds monopolize much of the food used in waterfowl feeding, but they are capable of physically harming other waterfowl species. For example, male Muscovy Ducks have been known to mate with nearly all species and kill weaker birds (Bolen 1971 quoting Delacour). On March 19, 1996, I saw a Pekin Duck roughly treating a hen Mallard as it apparently tried to mate with her.

Turning to another aspect of waterfowl feeding, a leaflet issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service entitled "Caution: Feeding Waterfowl may be Harmful!" warns of several dangers. These include birds becoming overly tame in urban environments, trampling and defecating on lawn areas in parks, golf courses, and residential areas; enticing waterfowl to delay their migration or into becoming permanent residents; and through crowding making them susceptible to such avian diseases as avian cholera, duck plague, and avian botulism.

I have already covered the problem of harm to lawns and grass areas at beach resorts. Only at Greer Lake could this be called a serious problem. The subject of migrants being turned into permanent residents was addressed by Don Arris. He was concerned about a large permanent Canada Goose population in Virginia Beach and the harm they do to lawns and golf courses. On the other hand, resident populations of Canada Geese and Mallards at the Ocean City and Rehobeth Beach ponds were small. For example, only 10 Canada Geese and 30 Mallards were counted at the largest Ocean Pines pond in June 1994.

No evidence of disease was found in the waterfowl observed by Dan Arris or those observed by myself. Fewer disease vectors were found in Mallards examined from urban parks in Massachusetts than those examined from outlying "wild" areas (Heusmann 1974). This writer stated that, "Insect populations in urban areas are frequently lower than in the surrounding countryside, meaning fewer vectors to carry disease."

Although sportsmen may decry the fact that urban waterfowl are off limits to hunting, there are many more people who enjoy having the birds close at hand where they can be fed and admired. Problems from urban waterfowl are more than outweighed by the pleasure they give people.

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## SPRING MIGRATION, MARCH 1—MAY 31, 1995

**DANIEL R. SOUTHWORTH AND LINDA SOUTHWORTH**

Although March and April were warmer and drier than normal with some migrants moving early during the beginning of the period, many May migrants were delayed until the middle of the month because of cool and wet weather.

*Observers:* Henry Armistead, George Armistead, Rick Blom, Connie Bockstie, Larry Bonham, Carol & Don Broderick, Martha Chestem, Randy Crook, Richard Crook, David Czaplak, Bill Dobbins, Sam Droege, Sam Dyke, Darius & Paula Ecker, Ethel Engle (reporting for Caroline County), Jane Farrell, Paul Fritz, Jean & Larry Fry, Shirley Geddes, Inez Glime, Marvin Hewitt, Mark Hoffman, George Jett, Ellen Lawler, Doug Lister, Nancy Magnusson, Diane Nagengast, Carol & Paul Newman, Paul Nistico, Mariana Nuttle, Peter Osenton, Bonnie Ott, Jim Paulus, Elizabeth Pitney (reporting for the Wicomico Bird Club), Kyle Rambo, Jan Reese, Sue Ricciardi, Robert Ringler, Norm & Fran Saunders, Gene Scarpulla, Stephen Simon, Connie Skipper, Jo Solem (reporting for Howard County), Dan & Linda Southworth, Jim Stasz, Mary Ann Todd, David Walbeck, Mark Wallace, Robert Warfield, Dave Webb, David Weesner, Levin Willey, Jim Wilkinson, Erika Wilson, Helen Zeichner.

*Abbreviations:* DC - District of Columbia, NWR - National Wildlife Refuge, PRNAS - Patuxent River Naval Air Station (St. Mary's County), PWRC - Patuxent Wildlife Research Center (Prince George's County), SP - State Park, UMCF - University of Maryland Central Farm (Howard County), WMA - Wildlife Management Area, WS - Wildlife Sanctuary.

*Locations:* Place names (with counties in parentheses) not in the index of the State highway map: Back River Waste Water Treatment Plant (Baltimore), Black Hill Park (Montgomery), Blackwater NWR (Dorchester), Browns Bridge (Howard), Catoctin National Park (Frederick), Deep Creek Lake (Garrett), Elliott Island (Dorchester), Fort Smallwood Park (Anne Arundel), Hains Point (DC), Hooper Island (Dorchester), Hughes Hollow (Montgomery), Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary (Anne Arundel), Lake Elkhorn (Howard), Lake Kittamaquundi (Howard), Liberty Lake (Carroll unless noted otherwise), Little Falls (Montgomery), Little Seneca Lake (Montgomery), Loch Raven (Baltimore), Martinak SP (Caroline), Meadowside Nature Center (Montgomery), Merkle WS (Prince George's), Myrtle Grove WMA (Charles), Patuxent River Park (Prince George's), Pennyfield (Montgomery), Piney Run Park (Carroll), Rileys Lock (Montgomery), Rockburn Branch Park (Howard), Rock Creek Park (DC), Rocky Gap SP (Allegany), Sandy Point SP (Anne Arundel), Schooley Mill Park (Howard), Swallow Falls SP (Garrett), Sycamore Landing (Mont-

gomery), Triadelphia Reservoir (Howard unless noted otherwise), Town Hill (Allegany), Tydings Island (Harford), Violettes Lock (Montgomery), Washington Monument SP (Washington).

*Loons, Grebes.* A **Red-throated Loon** was noted on the Gunpowder River in Harford County on March 19 (Webb), 5 were at Bellevue on March 30 (Armistead), 1 was discovered at Little Falls on April 3 (Czaplak), 22 were at Ocean City on April 11 (Reese), and 1 was sighted far inland at Deep Creek Lake on May 20 (Czaplak). **Common Loons** included 1 at Cobb Island on March 18 (Jett), 3 at Loch Raven on March 24 (Simon), 1 at Deep Creek Lake the same day (Skipper), 1 over Town Hill on March 25 (Paulus), 4 at Triadelphia on March 25 (Farrell), 14 at Loch Raven on April 6 (Simon), the Howard County high of 21 at Lake Elkhorn on April 30 (Wilkinson), and a late bird at Triadelphia on May 29 (Crooks, Chuck Stirrat). Steve Simon tallied 14 **Pied-billed Grebes** at Loch Raven on March 24, Ringler totaled 25 at Piney Run on April 11, and Marvin Hewitt found an adult Pied-billed with 4 young at Denton on May 15. A nesting Pied-billed was also found at a new location in northern Anne Arundel County off Route I97 (David Knight, Sue Rice). It was a very good season for **Horned Grebes**. Hawk watchers at Fort Smallwood were treated to a nice fallout of about 1000 of the birds when they landed on the Patapsco River there on March 23 (Ricciardi). Other Horned Grebes were 1 at Centennial on March 8 (Chestem, Zeichner), 3 there on March 12 (Southworths), 16 at Seneca on March 30 (Czaplak), 225 at Bellevue the same day (Armistead), 29 at Loch Raven on April 2 (Simon, Geddes), 34 at Rocky Gap on April 2 (Czaplak), and about 100 at Morgantown on the Potomac River on April 16 (Jett). A **Red-necked Grebe** was noted at Little Seneca Lake on March 15 (Bonham) and March 18 (Wilkinson), and an **Eared Grebe**, found by Mary Ann Todd, was at Seneca from May 2-4.

*Gannets, Cormorants, Anhinga.* Harry and Liz Armistead checked off 3 adult **Northern Gannets** at Bellevue on March 29-30, Jett tallied 40 at Cobb Island on April 1, Reese counted 45 in one hour flying north at Ocean City on April 4, Rambo spotted approximately 20 riding a strong southeast wind over Cedar Point lighthouse at PRNAS within ten minutes on April 12, and the Armisteads noted a single adult at Bellevue on April 16. Solo **Great Cormorants** were at Ocean City through March 20 (Saunders); a second-year Great was at Conowingo Dam on April 18 (Scarpulla, Blom). **Double-crested Cormorants** included 4 over Town Hill on March 25 (Paulus), 10 at Weverton on March 26 (Czaplak), an adult at Bellevue on March 29 (Harry & Liz Armistead), 1 at Meadowside Nature Center on March 31 (Bonham), 1 at Loch Raven on April 2 (Simon, Geddes), 350 at Ocean City on April 4 (Reese), 67 at Back River on April 9 (Scarpulla), 90 at Little Falls on April 11 (Czaplak), 25 at Rileys Lock on April 15 (Saunders), 400 at Conowingo on April 15 (Ringler, Blom), the Howard County high of 19 at Triadelphia on April 16 (Chestem), 145 at Blackwater on April 22 (Armistead+), 13 at Loch Raven on May 4 (Simon), 6 at Piney Run on May 10 (Ringler), and 4 flying over Penn Alps, Garrett County on May 27 (Ringler, Stasz). Many birders observed the **Anhinga** at Lake Merle in New Market that was discovered by the very gracious Jack and Joanne Alspaugh on April 9. The Anhinga was seen until at least April 22 (Southworths). Debate is still on-going as to the sex of the bird, probably a male. Another Anhinga was reported on May 13 at the Nanticoke River near Sharptown (Lawler).

*Herons, Ibises.* Maud Banks discovered an **American Bittern** at Lake Elkhorn on April 12, and another was at Sussman Pond in Montgomery County on April 17 (Saunders). Paul Nistico notched a single American Bittern flying across Route 210 at Piscataway on April 28. Later sightings were 1 at Wilde Lake on May

5 (Zeichner), 1 at Deal Island WMA on May 7 (Reese), and 2 at Hughes Hollow on May 8 (Bonham). A **Least Bittern** was also at Hughes Hollow on April 3 (Czaplak). Jan Reese found seven **Great Blue Herons** with five nests in a forest at Stevensville on March 12, and 10 migrants were at Piney Run on April 3 (Ringler). Scarpulla and Blom totaled 172 Great Blues at Conowingo on April 18. **Great Egrets** included 1 at Lily Pons on March 26 (Czaplak), 1 at St. Michaels on March 28 (Reese), 1 at Bellevue on March 29 (Harry & Liz Armistead), 1 at Back River on April 1 (Scarpulla), 2 at Wilde Lake on April 19 (Newmans), 1 at Piney Run the same day (Ringler), 1 at Lake Elkhorn on April 22 (Wilkinson), 1 at Pennyfield on May 9 (Bonham), and 5 at Lake Elkhorn on May 24 (D. Ecker). **Snowy Egrets** were moving early with 1 at Deal Island on March 11 (Lawler), 5 at St. Michaels on March 28 (Reese), and 1 at PRNAS on March 31 (Rambo). Others were 1 at Roosevelt Island, DC on April 18 (Dobbins), 64 at Elliott Island at dusk on May 6 (Armistead+), and 1 at Piscataway Creek on May 20 (Nistico). The first **Little Blue Herons** were 1 at West Ocean City on April 4 (Reese), and 1 at Elkridge on April 13-14 (Amy Thornton). The Brodericks found 5 **Tricolored Herons** at Deal Island WMA on March 18; Reese found 1 at West Ocean City on April 11 and 1 near Claiborne on May 13. Six **Cattle Egrets** were at PRNAS on April 20 (Lister), a **Green Heron** was at Centennial on April 16 (Emy Holdridge), and another was at Wilde Lake the same day (Newmans). Jan Reese had a nice count of 43 **Black-crowned Night-Herons** on April 4 at West Ocean City and a single bird at Barren Pond in Wicomico County on May 6. Another single Black-crowned was at Lake Elkhorn on April 19 (Wilkinson), and an adult was at Carderock on May 21 (Ringler+). Sue Ricciardi noted an adult **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** at Fort Smallwood on May 27. Dave Czaplak observed a **White Ibis** at West Ocean City, May 5-7. **Glossy Ibis** included 3 at Elliott Island on March 19 (Armistead, Willey), 2 at Deal Island WMA on March 24 (Lawler), 2 at Easton on April 9 (Reese), 28 at Blackwater on April 22, and 8 there on May 6 (Armistead+).

**Swans, Geese.** Large flocks of **Tundra Swans** included over 175 at Riley's Lock on March 11 (Saunders), 450 flying over Easton the same day (Reese), and 4 flocks totaling 178 at Bellevue on March 18 (Armistead). Lingering swans were 13 at Loch Raven on April 2 (Simon, Geddes), 2 near Hurlock on May 13 (Wilson), and 1 at Daniels on May 17 (Richard Crook and Frank Reilly). Armistead reported 42 **Mute Swans** at Bellevue on March 17, and Reese counted 44 at Newcomb on May 22. Five late **Snow Geese** were at Greensboro on May 20 (Hewitt), and 1 was at Tydings Island on May 21 (Webb). Steve Simon found 25 **Canada Geese** plus 10 young at Loch Raven on April 25. A small race Canada Goose was in a flock of 1000 geese at Piney Run on March 4 (Ringler).

**Puddle Ducks.** Good counts of **Wood Ducks** were compiled with 50 at Hughes Hollow on March 11 (Saunders), 25 at Tanyard on April 8 (Pat Lanahan), and 23 at Loch Raven on April 11 (Simon). There were 200 **Green-winged Teal** at Courthouse Point WMA, Cecil County on March 18 (Ringler, Blom). Lingering Green-wingeds were found with 2 near Emmitsburg on May 1 (Weesner), and a solo male at Daniels on May 6-7 (Crooks). Norm and Fran Saunders found 8 **Northern Pintails** at Hughes Hollow on March 11, 10 were at Piney Run the same day (Ringler+), and 100 were at Courthouse Point WMA on March 18 (Ringler, Blom). Armistead and Willey noted 8 **Blue-winged Teal** at Elliott Island and 130 **Northern Shovelers** at Blackwater on March 19. Marvin Hewitt found 2 Shovelers at Denton on April 7. There were 23 **Gadwalls** at Kent Narrows on March 4 and 32 at Burkittsville on March 5 (Ringler). At Loch Raven, Steve Simon found 23 Gadwalls on March 11 and 168 **American Wigeons** on March 1. A drake Gadwall was

at North Branch on May 29 (Stasz, Ringler, Hoffman+). Other wigeons were 20 at Rileys Lock on March 11 (Saunders), 80 at Blackwater on March 25 (Armistead, Willey), and the high of 500 at Deal Island WMA on April 8 (Lawler).

**Diving Ducks.** Farrell observed 13 **Canvasbacks** inland at Lake Kittamaqundi on March 11, and 310 were at Elliott Island on March 19 (Armistead, Willey). **Redheads** have been scarce over the last few years but Simon counted 91 at Loch Raven on March 1 along with 310 **Ring-necked Ducks**. Six Redheads visited Centennial on March 10 (Zeichner, Bockstie). The first **Greater Scaup** was at Weverton on March 11 (Czaplak). Others were 9 at Elliott Road Pond, Howard County on March 18 down to a solo male on March 19 (Farrell+), a female at Bellevue on March 30 (Armistead), 5 at Rocky Gap on April 15 (Czaplak), 1 at Loch Raven on May 1 (Simon), and a drake on the Bush River in Harford County on May 13 (Webb). **Lesser Scaups** included 520 at Bellevue on March 17 (Armistead), 30 at Loch Raven on April 2 (Simon, Geddes), and 150 at Oxford the same day (Reese). Two male and 1 female **Harlequin Ducks** were still at Ocean City on April 11 (Reese). **Oldsquaws** were very evident this spring with 3 at Seneca on March 30 (Czaplak), 250 at Solomons on March 16 (Reese), 300 at Cobb Island on March 18 (Jett), 9125 on March 17 and 3625 on March 30 at Bellevue (Armistead), 15 at Triadelphia on April 1 (Solem+), 250 at Oxford on April 2 (Reese), and 1 at Cobb Island on May 13 (Jett). Six Oldsquaws were noted inland at Rocky Gap on April 2 and another was at Big Pool the same day (Czaplak). Jan Reese tallied 70 **Black Scoters** at Ocean City on April 11, and high counts of **Surf Scoters** included 1500 at Bellevue on March 17 (Armistead), 1830 at Bellevue on March 29 (Harry & Liz Armistead), and 200 at Cobb Island on April 1 (Jett). Surf Scoters were also found inland with a drake at Piney Run, April 11 to May 3 (Ringler), 6 at Rocky Gap on April 30 (Czaplak), and a single first-year male at Laytonsville on May 14-16 (Czaplak, Bonham, Saunders). Armistead had a nice count of 265 **Common Goldeneyes** at Bellevue on March 30. Three others were inland at Loch Raven on April 2 (Simon, Geddes), and 1 was at Seneca on the late date of April 17 (Czaplak). Highs for **Buffleheads** were 1070 at Bellevue on March 17 (Armistead), 200 at Cobb Island on March 18 (Jett), 30 at Big Pool on April 2 (Czaplak), 72 at Loch Raven on April 9 (Simon, Kye Jenkins), and 40 at Rocky Gap on April 15 (Czaplak). Helen Zeichner noted 29 **Hooded Mergansers** at Highland Lake, Howard County on March 6. There were quite a few reports of **Common Mergansers** with 99, including 85 males, at Triadelphia on March 3 (Farrell, Solem), 68 at Piney Run on March 4 (Ringler), 21 at Weverton on March 11 (Czaplak), 45 at Loch Raven on March 13 (Simon), 18 at Frazier Flats in Caroline County the same day (Engle), 4 at PRNAS on April 20 (Rambo), 1 at Triadelphia, Montgomery County on May 4 (Saunders), 4 at Cambridge on May 13 (Wilson), and 2 at Little Meadows Lake, Garrett County on May 21 (Czaplak). Norm and Fran Saunders checked off 20 **Red-breasted Mergansers** at Rileys Lock on March 11, Harry Armistead totaled up 55 at Bellevue on March 30, and 1 remained at Little Meadows Lake on May 28 (Ringler, Stasz, Hoffman+). Seven **Ruddy Ducks** were at Hurlock on May 13 (Wilson).

**Diurnal Raptors.** Connie Skipper observed 4 **Turkey Vultures** at Swallow Falls SP on March 16. The first **Ospreys** were 1 at the Choptank River in Cambridge on March 2 (Lawler), 3 at Oxford on March 8 (Rita Stover), 1 at PRNAS on March 9 (Rambo), 1 at Conowingo on March 11 (Scarpulla), 1 at Little Seneca Lake on March 25 (Saunders), 1 at Weverton on March 26 (Czaplak), and 1 in Ellicott City on March 31 (Ott). A **Swallow-tailed Kite** was reported at Fort Smallwood Park on April 22 (Ricciardi, Bob Rineer, Calvin Orvis), and a **Mississippi Kite** was reported there on May 20 (Ricciardi+). **Bald Eagles** included 3 at Town Hill on

TABLE 1. HAWK MIGRATION AT TOWN HILL, ALLEGANY COUNTY  
SPRING 1995

COMPILED BY JIM PAULUS

| SPECIES                       | FIRST | LAST | TOTAL | BEST DAYS              |
|-------------------------------|-------|------|-------|------------------------|
| Osprey                        | 3/31  | 4/22 | 28    | 7 on 4/19, 4 on 4/22   |
| Bald Eagle                    | 2/20  | 4/19 | 17    | 2 on 3/13, 2 on 3/27   |
| Northern Harrier              | 2/25  | 4/22 | 14    | 3 on 4/20, 2 on 3/27   |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk            | 2/19  | 4/22 | 78    | 8 on 3/27, 5 on 3/22   |
| Cooper's Hawk                 | 3/4   | 4/15 | 33    | 4 on 3/12, 3 on 4/9    |
| Northern Goshawk              | 2/11  | 4/22 | 4     |                        |
| Red-shouldered Hawk           | 3/1   | 4/15 | 32    | 7 on 3/15, 5 on 3/14   |
| Broad-winged Hawk             | 4/9   | 4/22 | 92    | 27 on 4/19, 18 on 4/22 |
| Red-tailed Hawk               | 2/18  | 4/22 | 318   | 31 on 3/14, 20 on 3/27 |
| Rough-legged Hawk             | 3/14  | 4/13 | 4     | 2 on 3/14              |
| Golden Eagle                  | 2/1   | 4/19 | 31    | 5 on 3/1, 4 on 3/11    |
| American Kestrel              | 3/11  | 4/19 | 16    | 2 on 3/11, 2 on 4/19   |
| Merlin                        | 3/22  | 3/27 | 2     |                        |
| Peregrine Falcon              | 4/9   | 4/9  | 1     |                        |
| Unidentified                  |       |      | 38    |                        |
| Total<br>(56 days, 222 hours) | 2/1   | 4/22 | 708   | 48 on 3/14, 46 on 4/19 |

March 7 (Fritz), an adult at Town Hill on March 12 (Czaplak), a second-year bird over the Oakland Golf Course in Garrett County on May 6 (Skipper), and 4 at Triadelphia Reservoir in Montgomery County on May 6 (Saunders). Single female **Northern Harriers** were seen in Carroll County on Jasontown Road on May 7 and Feeser Road on May 20 (Ringler). Another was at Trout Run, Garrett County on May 27 (Stasz, Hoffman, Ringler+). All of these are possible breeders. A late **Northern Goshawk** was identified at Town Hill on April 22 (Paulus). Four **Rough-legged Hawks**, three of them dark morphs, were checked off at Town Hill this season, the first 2 on March 14 (Paulus). Paul Fritz tallied 11 **Golden Eagles** at Town Hill on March 7. Dave Weesner notched a **Merlin** near Emmitsburg on May 1. Other Merlins were 1 at Fulton Pond, Howard County on May 5 (Wilkinson), and 1 at Back River on May 13 (Scarpulla, Ralph Cullison). **Peregrine Falcons** included 2 at PRNAS on April 4 (Rambo), and 1 at Triadelphia on April 17 (Zeichner, Chestem).

*Gallinaceous Birds, Rails, Gallinules and Coots.* A male **Ring-necked Pheasant** was at Bittinger, Garrett County on April 8 (Czaplak), and a female was discovered near Wye Mills off Route 213 on May 23 (Reese). **Wild Turkeys** included 5 at Henry's Crossroads on March 19 (Armistead, Willey), 6 toms and 11 hens at Royal Oak Road in Wicomico County on March 25 (Brodericks), 3 at Prettyboy Reservoir on March 31 (Carroll Hetrick), 4, including a female sitting on 9 eggs along Shady Dell Road, Garrett County on May 13 (Skipper), and 1 near Tanyard on May 23 (Mike Nash). A **King Rail** was at Easton on April 9 (Reese), 1 was

TABLE 2. HAWK MIGRATION AT FORT SMALLWOOD PARK  
SPRING 1995

COMPILED BY SUE RICCIARDI

| SPECIES             | FIRST | LAST | TOTAL  | BEST DAYS                                 |
|---------------------|-------|------|--------|---|
| Black Vulture       | 2/25  | 5/20 | 148    | 15 on 3/31, 20 on 4/1,<br>11 on 3/12      |
| Turkey Vulture      | 2/19  | 6/5  | 3551   | 272 on 3/14,<br>268 on 3/26, 260 on 3/12  |
| Osprey              | 3/11  | 6/11 | 491    | 74 on 4/19, 45 on 4/14                    |
| Bald Eagle          | 3/11  | 6/11 | 34     | 4 on 4/16                                 |
| Swallow-tailed Kite | 4/22  |      | 1      |   |
| Mississippi Kite    | 5/20  |      | 1      |   |
| Northern Harrier    | 2/25  | 6/2  | 180    | 50 on 4/19, 19 on 4/16                    |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk  | 2/25  | 5/30 | 2831   | 475 on 4/19,<br>267 on 5/7, 244 on 4/9    |
| Cooper's Hawk       | 3/11  | 6/5  | 630    | 54 on 4/15, 49 on 4/1,<br>47 on 4/19, 21  |
| Red-shouldered Hawk | 3/11  | 4/29 | 94     | 15 on 3/11, 13 on 3/12                    |
| Broad-winged Hawk   | 4/9   | 6/11 | 3024   | 574 on 4/16,<br>499 on 4/19, 495 on 4/21  |
| Red-tailed Hawk     | 2/25  | 6/5  | 196    | 21 on 4/19, 13 on 4/22                    |
| American Kestrel    | 3/11  | 5/21 | 655    | 145 on 4/19, 108 on 3/31                  |
| Merlin              | 3/21  | 5/14 | 63     | 21 on 4/19, 9 on 4/15                     |
| Peregrine Falcon    | 4/30  | 5/12 | 2      |   |
| Unidentified        |       |      | 106    |   |
| Total               | 2/19  | 6/11 | 12,007 | 1424 on 4/19,<br>998 on 4/16, 765 on 4/21 |

(69 days, 391.9 hours)

heard at Centennial Park on May 9 (Farrell), and 2 females were heard calling at Aberdeen Proving Ground on May 13 (Webb). **Virginia Rails** were also heard with 1 on Spesutie Island, Harford County on March 21 (Webb), and 1 at Centennial on May 10-12 (Solem+). Thirty-three were tallied at Black Marsh Wildlands, Baltimore County on May 13 (Scarpulla+). **Soras** included 1 at Sussman Pond, Montgomery County on April 24 (Saunders), an adult at Lily Pons on April 25 (Weesner), 1 at Nanticoke on May 5 (Czaplak), and 4 at Black Marsh Wildlands on May 13 (Scarpulla+). Early **Common Moorhens** were 1 at Hughes Hollow on April 3 (Czaplak), and 4 feeding together at Tanyard on April 19 (Engle). Highs for the **American Coot** were 1100 at Loch Raven on March 1 (Simon), 200 at Piney Run on March 4 (Ringler), and 500 at Deal Island WMA on March 24 (Lawler). There were still 450 coots at Loch Raven on April 16 (Simon, Debbie Terry), down to 160 on April 20 (Simon). Two coots were still on the Patuxent River at Benedict on May 8 (Nistico), and 1 was at Hammel Glade Swamp near Oakland, Garrett County on the late date of May 13 (Skipper).

*Plovers, Stilts.* The high for **Black-bellied Plovers** was 64 around Blackwater on May 6 (Steve Ford), and the last report was of 2 at Tydings Island on May 21 (Webb). Nine **Semipalmated Plovers** were at Tanyard on April 24 (Engle), and **Killdeer** of interest were 23 at Finksburg on March 12 (Ringler), 60 at Fulton Pond in Howard County on April 1 (Farrell, Solem), and 1, with 2 young, at West Ocean City on April 29 (Reese). A **Black-necked Stilt** was at Blackwater on April 16 (Czaplak) and April 22 (Armistead+); 7 were at Deal Island WMA on May 7 (Reese).

*Sandpipers.* Highs for **Greater Yellowlegs** were 95 at Blackwater on April 22 (Armistead+), and 43 at Merkle WS on April 24 (Nistico). Dave Weesner reported 28 **Lesser Yellowlegs** and 22 **Solitary Sandpipers** near Emmitsburg on May 1, and Jan Reese noted 4 **Willetts** near Claiborne on May 13. A **Spotted Sandpiper** was at Germantown on April 3 (Warfield), and higher counts were 20 at Triadelphia on May 11 (Magnusson), and another 20 at Piscataway on May 20 (Nistico). **Upland Sandpipers** observed were 5 at PRNAS on April 20 (Rambo), 1 at Merkle WS on April 24 (Nistico), and 2 at PRNAS on May 10 (Rambo, Lister). A **Whimbrel** was discovered at St. George Island on May 26 (Nistico). The Brodericks found a **Red Knot** remaining at Ocean City on March 10, and **Sanderlings** of interest were 6 at PRNAS on April 14 (Rambo), and 11 there on May 10 (Rambo, Lister). The first **Least Sandpiper** was at Easton on April 9 (Reese), 35 were at Blackwater on April 22 (Armistead+), over 40 were at Tanyard on April 30 (Engle), and 28 were at Triadelphia on May 11 (Magnusson). The Armisteads had a nice total of 35 **Pectoral Sandpipers** at Blackwater on April 15, and Reese enjoyed a good count of 85 **Purple Sandpipers** at Ocean City on April 11. **Dunlins** of note were 220 at Blackwater on March 25 (Armistead, Willey), 2 at Tanyard on April 30 (Engle), and 4 near Emmitsburg on May 1 (Weesner). The first **Short-billed Dowitcher** was at Blackwater on April 15 (Armisteads), 3 were there on April 16 (Czaplak), and 19 were seen at PRNAS on May 10 (Rambo, Lister). A **Long-billed Dowitcher** was calling at Laytonsville on May 14 (Czaplak); 1 was there on May 16 (Saunders). Dave Czaplak listed 19 **Common Snipe** at Hughes Hollow on March 29, and the Brodericks found an **American Woodcock** with young in Worcester County on April 13.

*Jaeger, Gulls, Terns.* A light-phase **Pomarine Jaeger** was identified about twenty miles out from Ocean City on May 14 (Weesner). Interesting **Laughing Gulls** were 1 at Ocean City on March 16 (Brodericks), 2 at Tanyard on March 21 (Engle), 700 seen 5 miles south of Easton on April 16 (Reese), and 4 at Triadelphia on April 23 (Farrell, Solem). An adult-winter **Little Gull** turned up at Back River on April 1 (Scarpulla, Sanford, Osenton), and a Little Gull was discovered at Herrington Manor Lake, Garrett County on April 9 (Czaplak). An adult **Black-headed Gull** was sorted out at Conowingo on April 2 (Jett), and April 18 (Scarpulla, Blom). High reports for **Bonaparte's Gulls** were as follows: 157 at Georgetown Reservoir, DC on April 1 (Dobbins), 1518 at Back River on April 1 (Scarpulla), 147 at Lake Kittamaquundi on April 6 (Ott+), and 150 at Little Falls on April 12 (Czaplak). The high for **Ring-billed Gulls** was 4000 at Conowingo on March 11 (Scarpulla), 1000 in fields in Carroll County on March 11 (Ringler), and 189 were tallied at Town Hill on March 27, as were 5 **Herring Gulls** on March 19 (Paulus, Czaplak). **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** included 2 at Triadelphia on March 4 and April 30 (Farrell, Solem), 1 at Conowingo on March 18 (Scarpulla) and April 2 (Jett), and 1 at Morgantown on April 16 (Jett). Sixty **Great Black-backed Gulls** were at Green Manor Turf Farm, Howard County on March 4 (Ringler), 1 was still at Violettes Lock on April 7 (Bonham), and 120 were totaled at Conowingo on April 18 (Scarpulla, Blom). **Caspian Terns** were on schedule with 2 at Lake Kittamaquundi on April 9 (Zeichner), 1 at Little Falls on April 14 (Czaplak), an exceptional count of 117 at Triadelphia on April 16 (Chestem),

5 at Rileys Lock on April 15 (Saunders), 61 at Blackwater on April 22 (Armistead+), 94 resting on Tydings Island on April 24 (Webb), and 1 in the Weverton area on May 14 (Czaplak). **Royal Terns** were early with 14 at the Nanticoke River near Cedar Hill on April 1 (Lawler), 2 at Cobb Island the same day (Jett), and 3 at Ocean City on April 4 (Reese). Others included 44 at Morgantown on April 16 (Jett), 2 at Bellevue on April 21 (Armistead), and 1 at Choptank on May 6 (D. Ford). Inland **Common Terns** were 21 at Seneca on May 4 (Czaplak) and 1 at Little Seneca Lake on May 8 (Bonham). **Forster's Terns** began with 9 at Blackwater on March 25 (Armistead, Willey), 1 at Bellevue on March 29 (Harry & Liz Armistead), 3 at Oxford on April 2 (Reese), and 1 at Little Falls on April 12 (Czaplak). Simon found 2 Forster's at Loch Raven on May 4; 2 were at Violettes Lock on May 8 (Bonham). Three **Black Terns** made an appearance at Seneca on May 15-16 (Czaplak). A **Black Skimmer** was noted at Hooper Island on May 6 (Armistead+).

*Doves, Cuckoos, Owls.* Jan Reese estimated 125 **Rock Doves** at Stevensville on April 13. **Black-billed Cuckoos** were 1 on April 23 at Gorman Road west of I-95 in Howard County (Osenton), and another heard on April 29 and later seen on May 8 at Pylesville (Frys). Other Black-billeds were at Nanjemoy on May 12 (Jett) and at Denton on May 15 (Nuttle). **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were early as well with single sightings at Parsonsburg on April 21 (Pitney), at Salisbury on April 22 (Brodericks), in Charles County on April 23 (Nistico), and at Aberdeen Proving Ground on April 28 (Webb). The last **Short-eared Owl** was seen at Taneytown on March 11 (Ringler+).

*Caprimulgids, Swifts.* A **Chuck-will's-widow** was noted at Bellevue on April 21 (Armistead), and a Chuck's nest with 2 eggs was found at Easton on May 15 (Reese). Dobbins reported a female **Whip-poor-will** at Roosevelt Island, DC on April 14, and a whip was singing in Waldorf on April 15 (Jett). **Chimney Swifts** began with 2 at Centennial on April 10 (Ott), and 15 at Centreville on April 12 (Reese). On April 13, 3 were at Town Hill (Paulus), 1 was at Little Falls (Czaplak), and 4 were at Greensboro (Hewitt).

*Hummingbird, Flycatchers.* The **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** at Denton on April 16 was a little early (Nuttle). The only **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were 1 at Rockburn Branch on May 14 (Eckers) and 1 singing at Swallow Falls SP on May 28 (Maureen Harvey+). An early **Eastern Wood-Pewee** was in Worcester County on April 13 (Brodericks), and Dave Czaplak heard a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** singing at Little Falls on May 31. An early **Acadian Flycatcher** was at Milburn Landing on April 13 (Brodericks). An **Alder Flycatcher** was seen and heard at Schooley Mill on May 18 (Solem) and May 20 (Magnusson). Others were singles at PRNAS on May 13 (Lister), Cunningham Swamp, Garrett County the same day (Skipper), and Layhill Park, Montgomery County on May 20 (Saunders). Three **Eastern Phoebes** were noted at Point of Rocks on March 12 (Warfield), and another was at Odenton on March 16 (L. Southworth). The **Great Crested Flycatcher** at Federalsburg on April 2 was extremely early (Glime). Another early Great Crested was heard calling at PWRC on April 10 (Droege). Others were singles at Salisbury on April 21 (Lawler), Bellevue on April 23 (Armistead+), and Charles County on April 24 (Nistico). The first **Eastern Kingbirds** were 1 at Little Falls on April 13 (Czaplak), and 1 at Wilde Lake on April 19 (Zeichner).

*Horned Larks, Swallows, Crows.* The last **Horned Larks** were about 150 noted at Route 99 and Underwood Road in Howard County on March 12 (Farrell, T.

Dennis Coskren). The first **Purple Martins** were solo birds near Triadelphia Mill Road on March 20 (Wallace) and at Town Hill on March 27 (Paulus). **Tree Swallows** were early and began with 6 at Hughes Hollow on March 11 (Saunders). On March 13, 15 were at Hughes Hollow (Czaplak, Bonham) and 1 at PWRC (Droege). Others included 2 at Denton on March 15 (Hewitt), 1 at Town Hill the same day (Paulus), 2 at Elliott Road Pond, Howard County on March 17 (Wilkinson), 1 at Deal Island WMA on March 18 (Brodericks), 3 at Hashawha, Carroll County on March 18 (Bill Culp+), 1 at Rocky Gap on March 19 (Czaplak), 2 near Wye Mills on March 22 (Reese), 7 flying up the Potomac River opposite Harpers Ferry on March 24 (Wilkinson), and 2 at Oakland on March 28 (Skipper). The first **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** were 1 at Centennial on March 21 (Ott), and 1 at Hughes Hollow on March 22 (Saunders). Czaplak noted 2 Roughwingeds at Hughes Hollow on March 29 and 13 in DC on March 30 and reported extraordinarily early **Bank Swallows** with 2 at Hughes Hollow on March 29 and single birds at Seneca on March 31 and Little Falls on April 13. The Armisteads saw 1 Bank Swallow at Blackwater on April 15, and about 500 were at Romney Creek, Harford County on May 13 (Webb). Larry Bonham discovered 2 **Cliff Swallows** at a new nesting site at Lake Needwood, Montgomery County on May 6. A Cliff Swallow was at Blackwater on May 6 (Armistead+), and 2 late migrants were at Pt. Lookout on May 26 (Nisticco). **Barn Swallows** were a little early with 1 at Centennial on March 24 (Ott, Bockstie), 1 in Salisbury on March 25 (Lawler), 8 at Tanyard on April 1 (Engle), and 1 at Sycamore Landing on April 1 (Saunders). Jim Paulus noted 6 **Fish Crows** at Town Hill on March 11 and 7 there on March 22. Harry Armistead tallied 170 at Bellevue on March 17. A crow flock estimated at 900 on April 3 at Piney Run included hundreds of both species (Ringler).

**Wrens, Kinglets, Gnatcatcher.** An industrious **Carolina Wren** had a newly built nest at St. Michaels on March 18 (Reese), and the Armisteads found 2 **House Wrens** at a nest with five eggs at Bellevue on May 20. A lingering **Winter Wren** was at the Catoctin National Park on May 1 (Weesner). Connie Skipper discovered a **Sedge Wren** along Accident-Bittinger Road in Garrett County on May 22, which was also heard on May 27 (Ringler, Stasz, Hoffman+, and a **Marsh Wren** was checked off at Grasonville on April 13 (Lawler). Norm and Fran Saunders tallied 25 **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** at Rileys Lock on April 15, and an early **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was at PRNAS on April 1 (Lister).

**Thrushes, Mimids, Pipits.** Randy and Richard Crook noted an early **Veery** at Daniels on April 15. **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** this spring were 2 at Blockhouse Point on May 14 (Czaplak) and May 15 (Bonham), 1 at St. Michaels on May 18 (Lem Warrimer), 1 at Bellevue on May 20 (Armisteads), 3 at Ridgley on May 22 (Steve Ford), and 1 at Centennial on May 23 (Jo and Bob Solem). A **Swainson's Thrush** was at Lake Elkhorn on April 29 (Wilkinson), and 10 **Hermit Thrushes** visited Roosevelt Island, DC on April 9 (Dobbins). A **Wood Thrush** was at Salisbury on April 17 (Brodericks), another was singing along Gunpowder Road, Baltimore County the same day (Jett), and 3 were listed at PRNAS on April 18 (Rambo). **American Robins** included 125 at St. Michaels on March 1 (Reese), over 100 at Foxtown Road, Garrett County on March 24 (Skipper), and a flock of 40 migrants at Gillis Falls Park, Carroll County on April 8 (Ringler). Norm and Fran Saunders found a **Gray Catbird**, which may have wintered locally, at Hughes Hollow on March 11. Others were at Muddy Hole Road, Wicomico County on March 25 (Brodericks), at Bellevue on March 29 (Harry & Liz Armistead), at Sycamore Landing on April 1 (Saunders), at Centennial on April 4 (Ott), and at PRNAS on April 12 (Rambo). The first **Brown Thrasher** took advantage of the mild weather with an

early arrival at Port Tobacco Courthouse on March 19 (Jett). Another was at Bellevue on March 29 (Harry & Liz Armistead). Migrating **American Pipits** included 12 feeding on rocks in the rapids at Weverton on March 11 (Czaplak), 75 at Easton on April 9 and 30 seen 5 miles south of Easton on April 16 (Reese), 80 at Merkle WS on April 24 (Nistico), and 36 at UMCF on May 7 (Ott, Solem).

**Waxwings, Vireos.** Good counts of **Cedar Waxwings** were 500 at Salisbury State campus on March 2 (Lawler), 95 at Robbins, Dorchester County on May 6 (Armistead+), and 73 at Triadelphia on May 24 (Solem). The first **White-eyed Vireo** was in Davidsonville on April 7 (Droege). Another was at Piney Run on April 16 (Ringler), and 1 was at Hughes Hollow on April 18 (Bonham). Dave Czaplak tallied 10 singing **Solitary Vireos** in Garrett County on April 9. Others were 1 at PRNAS on April 10 (Lister), 1 at Loch Raven the same day (Simon), and 1 at Claiborne on May 8 (Reese). The first **Yellow-throated Vireos** were 1 at Davidsonville on April 20 (Droege), 1 at Sycamore Landing on April 22 (Bonham), and 1 at Martinak SP on April 23 (Nuttle). **Warbling Vireos** were also a little early with single birds at Little Falls on April 18 (Czaplak), Davidsonville on April 19 (Droege), and Phoenix on April 23 (Simon). Reese found 1 at Claiborne on May 8. Czaplak heard a **Philadelphia Vireo** singing in DC on May 31. A probable Philadelphia Vireo was reported at Lake Elkhorn on May 10 (Wilkinson). Early **Red-eyed Vireos** included 1 at Little Falls on April 19 (Czaplak), 1 at Wilde Lake (Newmans) and 1 at Lake Elkhorn (Wilkinson) on April 20, 1 at PRNAS on April 21 (Rambo), 2 at Sycamore Landing on April 22 (Bonham), 3 in the Nassawango area on April 23 (Lawler), and 1 at Martinak SP the same day (Nuttle).

**Warblers.** **Blue-winged Warblers** began with 1 at Little Falls on April 19 (Czaplak), 1 at PWRC on April 21 (Droege), a singing male at Morgan Environmental Area, Carroll County on April 22 (Ringler), a male at Coulborne Mill Road, Wicomico County on April 23 (Pitney), and 1 at Martinak SP the same day (Nuttle). **Golden-winged Warblers** were 1 at Davidsonville on April 25 (Droege), 1 observed singing a Parula song for 40 minutes at Bear Swamp near the Salisbury airport on May 6 (Reese), 1 at Rockburn on May 6 (Ott, Southworths+), 1 at Bayside Beach on May 6 (Geddes), and 1 at Pennyfield on May 14 (Bonham). A Golden-winged at Finzel on May 27 was singing a Blue-winged song continuously (Ringler, Hoffman+). A hybrid **Brewster's Warbler** was discovered by Darius Ecker at Lake Elkhorn on April 21. Two **Orange-crowned Warblers** were found this season with 1 near Neavitt on March 25 (George Didden), and 1 at Lake Kittamaquendi on May 11 (Ott). Bonham turned up the first **Nashville Warbler** at Meadowside Nature Center on April 25. A very early **Northern Parula** was singing on the D.C. section of the C&O Canal on April 7 (Bruce Beehler), and the first **Yellow Warbler** appeared at Hughes Hollow on April 18 (Bonham). At least 40 Yellow Warblers were at Deal Island WMA on April 29 (Brodericks). A **Chestnut-sided Warbler** passed through Montgomery County at Triadelphia Reservoir on April 30 (Saunders), and 12 were counted at Claiborne on May 8 (Reese). **Black-throated Blue Warblers** included 1 on the C&O Canal in Montgomery County on April 22 (Saunders), 1 at Davidsonville on April 23 (Droege), 2 at Washington Monument SP on April 26 (Weesner), 1 at Schooley Mill on April 28 (Ott, Solem), and 15 in Talbot County on May 9 (Reese). The inland high for **Yellow-rumped Warblers** was 80 at Lake Elkhorn on April 22 (Wilkinson). An early **Black-throated Green Warbler** was at Hughes Hollow on April 7 (Czaplak), 1 was near Oakland on April 19 (Skipper), and another was at Mattaponi Creek, Prince George's County on April 24 (Nistico). Also early was a **Blackburnian Warbler** just south of Mason Springs on April 15 (Jett). Another Blackburnian was found at Hallmark, in south-

ern Howard County on April 23 (Ward Ebert). Along the C&O Canal in D.C. an early **Yellow-throated Warbler** arrived on Mar 22 and 4 singing males were present on April 11 (Beehler). Weesner checked off a **Pine Warbler** at Washington Monument SP on the early date of March 12. **Palm Warblers** began with 1 in DC on March 30 (Czaplak), 1 at Pt. Breeze Business Park, Baltimore City on April 4 (Wilkinson), and 1 near Grasonville on April 9 (Linda & Nancy Southworth); 8 Palms were tallied at Rileys Lock on April 15 (Saunders). A Western and a Yellow Palm were seen at Morgan Run Environmental Area on April 22 and a late Yellow Palm was at Soldiers Delight, Baltimore County on May 3 (Ringler). A **Blackpoll Warbler** was at Havre de Grace on May 1 (Webb), and a **Cerulean Warbler** was at the C&O Canal in Montgomery County on April 22 (Saunders). **Prothonotary Warblers** included 1 at Pennyfield on April 18 (Bonham), and 2 at Daniels on April 30 (Solem, Bill Newman). The **Worm-eating Warbler** at Spring Oaks, Montgomery County on April 16 was a little early (Saunders). Another was at McKeldin Area, Patapsco Valley SP, Carroll County on April 20 (Ringler). Sam Dyke heard a **Swainson's Warbler** on May 6 about a mile southeast of the Salisbury airport, and it was subsequently observed by Jan Reese and Jeff Effinger. An early **Ovenbird** was at PRNAS on April 8 (Rambo), 1 was at Girdletree the same day (Brodericks), and another was at Rileys Lock on April 15 (Saunders). The high for **Northern Waterthrushes** was 11 singing at Roosevelt Island, DC on May 19 (Dobbins). The first **Louisiana Waterthrush** was at Meadowside Nature Center on March 31 (Bonham), and 1 was at Schooley Mill on April 1 (Zeichner, Chestem). A **Kentucky Warbler** was at the C&O Canal in Montgomery County on April 22 (Saunders), and another was at Greensboro on April 27 (Hewitt). A **Mourning Warbler** was notched this spring at Pennyfield on May 12 (Bonham). The first **Common Yellowthroat** was heard singing at Mill Creek Sanctuary, Talbot County on April 9 (Ringler), and 1 was at Grasonville on April 13 (Lawler). **Hooded Warblers** began with 1 at Salisbury Airport on April 17 (Brodericks), 1 at Loch Raven on April 22 (Simon), and 1 at Davidsonville on April 23 (Droege).

*Tanagers, Grosbeaks, Buntings.* **Early Summer Tanagers** were 1 at Salisbury airport on April 17 (Brodericks), and 1 at Martinak SP on April 23 (Nuttle). Another was at UMCF on May 7 (Ott, Solem), and 3 were along the north shore of the Bush River, Harford County on May 13 (Webb). The first **Scarlet Tanagers** were on the C&O Canal in Montgomery County on April 22 (Saunders), and at Davidsonville on April 23 (Droege). **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** began with 1 at Denton, April 24-28 (Nuttle), 1 at Phoenix on April 28 (Simon), and 2 near Oakland also on April 28 (Skipper); 18 were tallied in Talbot County on May 9 (Reese). The **Blue Grosbeak** at Bayside Beach on April 3 was extremely early (Geddes). Others included 1 at Nassawango on April 23 (Lawler), and 1 at Schooley Mill on April 29 (Wilkinson). An early **Indigo Bunting** was noted at Timberleigh Way in Howard County on April 26 (Nagengast).

*Sparrows.* A **Chipping Sparrow** was in Charles County on March 11 (Nistico), and the first at Town Hill was on March 16 (Paulus). Others were 1 singing on a lawn at California on March 16 (Reese), 1 at Ellicott City the same day (Ott), a few in Waldorf on March 18 (Jett), 4 at Blackwater on March 19 (Armistead, Willey), and 1 at Bellevue on March 29 (Harry & Liz Armistead). A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was at a feeder near Reistertown from Feb. 21 until March 11 (Jim Peters+). Richard and Randy Crook totaled up 6 **Vesper Sparrows** at Mt. Pleasant on April 16, and Kyle Rambo tallied approximately 200 **Savannah Sparrows** at PRNAS on May 5. Twenty Savannahs were at UMCF on May 7 (Ott, Solem). The first **Grasshopper Sparrow** was 1 at Roxbury Road in Howard County on April

10 (Wallace), and another was at Blackwater on April 22 (Armistead+). In Garrett County Connie Skipper found 2 **Henslow's Sparrows** off Rock Lodge Road on May 13, 2 off Accident-Bittinger Road on May 22, and 3 at Combination Road on May 23. A **Sharp-tailed Sparrow** was at Pt. Breeze Business Park in Baltimore City on April 19 (Wilkinson), and 10 were checked off at Elliott Island on May 6 (Armistead+). Two **Seaside Sparrows** were seen at Havre de Grace on April 22 and 1 was there on April 24 (Webb). Wilkinson saw a **Fox Sparrow** at Point Breeze on the late date of April 20 (Wilkinson). Single **Lincoln's Sparrows** were identified in Columbia on May 3 (Chestem) and at Spring Oaks, Montgomery County, on May 9 and May 16 (Saunders). Connie Skipper reported the last **White-crowned Sparrow**, near Oakland on May 14, and also found 3 **Dark-eyed Juncos** at the Table Rock Fire Tower in Garrett County on May 13.

*Blackbirds, Orioles, Finches.* Dave Webb counted 172 **Bobolinks** at Aberdeen Proving Ground on May 13, and the high for **Rusty Blackbirds** was 100 at Myrtle Grove WMA on March 19 (Jett). Jan Reese reported 8 **Boat-tailed Grackles** near Wittman on May 13, tallied over 3000 **Common Grackles** at Skipton, Talbot County on March 3, and observed a Common Grackle carrying nesting material near St. Michaels on March 11. An **Orchard Oriole** was early at Bayside Beach on April 3 (Geddes), 1 was at PWRC on April 21 (Droege), and 1 was at Lake Elkhorn on April 22 (Wilkinson). Baltimore Orioles were also early with 1 at Bayside Beach on April 3 (Geddes). Others were 1 in Grasonville on April 9 (Linda & Nancy Southworth), 1 at Triadelphia on April 22 (Osenton), 3 at Timberleigh Way in Howard County on April 22 (Nagengast), 1 at Denton the same day (Nuttle), and 15 in Talbot County on May 9 (Reese). Dave Czaplak reported 15 **Purple Finches** singing at Swallow Falls SP on April 9. Steve Ford discovered a **Pine Siskin** in Dorchester County on May 6, and 3 were at Swallow Falls SP on May 20 (Czaplak) and May 28 (Ringler, Stasz, Hoffman+).

*Corrigendum.* The authors erroneously included 70 Brown Thrashers at UMCF on March 22 in the Spring Migration 1993 report (Volume 51, Number 1). The date and location are correct but the birds were **American Pipits** (Chestem, Ott, Solem).

9763 Early Spring Way, Columbia, Maryland 21046

## BREEDING SEASON, JUNE 1 - JULY 31, 1995

**DANIEL R. SOUTHWORTH AND LINDA SOUTHWORTH**

This summer was much like last year with an about average June and a hot and dry July.

*Observers:* Henry Armistead, Margie Baldwin, Anne Bishop, Connie Bockstie, Larry Bonham, Martha Chestem, Patty Craig, David Czaplak, Ethel Engle (reporting for Caroline County), Jane Farrell, D. Ford, Inez Glime, Dave & Maureen Harvey, Marvin Hewitt, Marshall Iliff, George Jett, Doug Lister, Nancy Magnusson, Bill Miles, Paul Nistico, Mariana Nuttle, Peter Osenton, Bonnie Ott, Elizabeth Pitney (reporting for the Wicomico Bird Club), Kyle Rambo, Jan Reese, Robert Ringler, Gene Scarpulla, Stephen Simon, Connie Skipper, Jo Solem (reporting for Howard County), Jim Stasz, John Taylor, Mary Ann Todd, Mary Twigg, Dave Weesner, Jim Wilkinson, Helen Zeichner.

*Abbreviations:* DC - District of Columbia, BBS - Breeding Bird Survey, NWR - National Wildlife Refuge, PRNAS - Patuxent River Naval Air Station (St. Mary's County), SP - State Park, UMCF - University of Maryland Central Farm (Howard County), WMA - Wildlife Management Area.

*Locations:* Place names (with counties in parentheses) not in the index of the State highway map: Barren Island (Dorchester), Blackwater NWR (Dorchester), Browns Bridge (Howard), Holland Island (Dorchester), Lake Kittamaqundi (Howard), Loch Raven (Baltimore), Piney Run Park (Carroll), Pone Island (Dorchester), Poplar Island (Talbot), Spring Island (Dorchester), Swallow Falls SP (Garrett), Triadelphia Reservoir (Howard unless noted otherwise).

*Loons, Grebes, Pelicans, Cormorants.* The last migrant **Common Loon** at Piney Run was found on June 1 (Ringler). Other stragglers were 1 at Broadford Lake on June 3 (Czaplak), 1 in winter plumage at Loch Raven on June 11 (Scarpulla, Blom), 1 in basic plumage at Holland Island on July 2 (Armistead, Taylor), and 1 at Deal Island WMA on July 10 (Armistead). Single **Pied-billed Grebes** were noted in Howard County this summer at Lake Elkhorn on July 8 (Wilkinson), and at Stanford Road Pond during July 17-31 (Farrell). Brown Pelicans at Point Lookout SP included 8 on June 4 (Bishop, Craig), 11 on June 8, 8 on June 9, 14, including 6 adults on June 27, and 19, including 8 adults, on June 28 (Craig). Four **Brown Pelicans** were at PRNAS on July 5 (Rambo), and 70 were tallied at the 4th street flats in Ocean City on July 22 (Czaplak). On July 2, an immature was at Pone Island, an adult was at Holland Island, and 7 pelicans were on Spring Island (Armistead, Taylor). **Double-crested Cormorants** were numerous with 2 at North East Town Park in Cecil County on June 3 (Griffith), 11 five miles east of Easton on June 10 (Reese), several with 70 active nests at Poplar Island on June 17 (Armistead, Miles, Taylor), 90 at Spring Island on July 2 (Armistead, Taylor), 15 at PRNAS on July 5 (Rambo), 1 at Piney Run on July 9, an unusual date for a migrant (Ringler), 1 at Triadelphia on July 22 (Osenton), 80 at Conowingo on July 30 (Scarpulla), and 135 at Tilghman Island on July 30 (Reese).

*Herons, Ibises.* Jan Reese found 7 **Least Bitterns** at the Kings Creek Preserve, Talbot County, on June 10. Harry Armistead and John Taylor totaled up 20 breeding pairs of **Great Blue Herons** on Holland Island and 117 active nests on Bloodsworth Island on July 2. Steve Simon checked off 11 Great Blues at Loch Raven on July 3, and 18 were at Triadelphia on July 22 (Magnusson). **Great Egrets** included 36 at Blackwater on June 3 (Armistead), 1 at Middle Branch, Baltimore Harbor from June 20 through the end of the period (Wilkinson), 20 breeding pairs on Holland Island on July 2 (Armistead, Taylor), 4 at Pennyfield on July 13 (Bonham), and 1 at Cumberland on July 16 (Czaplak). Twenty breeding **Snowy Egret** pairs and 10 **Little Blue Heron** pairs were on Holland Island on July 2 (Armistead, Taylor). Steve Simon discovered 2 Little Blues at Loch Raven on July 3, two were at Hughes Hollow on July 12 (Bonham), another was at Centennial on July 16 (Chestem+), and an immature was at Centennial on July 17 (Bockstie). Seven breeding pairs of **Tricolored Herons** were found on Holland Island on July 2 (Armistead, Taylor); 2 Tricoloreds were at Horsehead Sanctuary on July 16 (Ringler, Iliff, Stasz, Jett). Armistead and Taylor found seven breeding pairs of **Cattle Egrets**, one breeding pair of **Green Herons**, and two breeding pairs of **Black-crowned Night-Herons** on Holland Island on July 2. Another Black-crowned was at Hughes Hollow on July 3 (Bonham), and Lake Elkhorn yielded an immature on July 11 and 2 adults and an immature on July 20 (Wilkinson). **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** were 6 breeding pairs on Holland Island and 12

birds at Adam Island on July 2 (Armistead, Taylor), and 20 at Ewell, Smith Island on July 6 (Armistead, John Weske). Gary Griffith reported 5 **Glossy Ibises** at Meadow Park, Cecil County on June 22, 2 breeding pairs were on Holland Island on July 2 (Armistead, Taylor), and 16 Glossies were at Blackwater on July 29 (Armistead, Baldwin, Todd).

**Waterfowl.** The bad news is that Harry Armistead tallied 81 **Mute Swans** in the Barren Island area on June 3. The good news is that he found little sign of breeding there this summer. However, 15 Mute Swans were found on Holland Island on July 2 including a female with 4 young (Armistead, Taylor). Marvin Hewitt noted 3 **Snow Geese** at Greensboro on June 1. Summer flocks of **Canada Geese** continue to increase with 125 of the geese at Piney Run on June 1 and 200 at Liberty Lake on July 20 (Ringler), 33 goslings at Lake Kittamaqundi on June 26 and 114 total geese there on June 30 (Chestem) and 440 at Loch Raven on July 12 (Simon). A large flock of Canada Geese totaling 845 was also at Blackwater on July 29 where 46 **Wood Ducks** were found the same day (Armistead, Baldwin, Todd). A male **Green-winged Teal** with 2 females visited Lake Elkhorn on June 13 (Wilkinson), and 4 **American Black Ducks** were observed at Liberty Lake on July 20 (Ringler). Either a female or an immature **Northern Pintail** was noted at Centennial on July 17 (Bockstie). Engle found 4 **Blue-winged Teal** at Tanyard on July 15 and 7 there the next day, probably early post-breeding wanderers. Nine **Gadwalls**, including a female with 5 downy young, were at Holland Island on July 2, and 45, including groups of 4, 9 and 6 young, were at Deal Island WMA on July 10 (Armistead+). Gary Griffith reported solo **Ring-necked Ducks** this summer at Gunther's Pond, Cecilton on June 2, at North East Town Park, Cecil County on June 8, and at Cecilton on June 15. A **Surf Scoter** was at Poplar Island on June 17 (Armistead, Miles, Taylor), and a **White-winged Scoter** was at Tilghman Island on July 30 (Reese). A female **Bufflehead** was discovered at Deep Creek Lake on June 16 (Skipper), and a first-summer male was at Conowingo on July 30 (Scarpulla). A **Ruddy Duck** was at Lake Kittamaqundi on July 22 (Chestem).

**Diurnal Raptors.** The two **Ospreys** at Loch Raven on June 2 (Simon), and the one at Triadelphia on July 28 (Magnussen) were interesting sightings. A **Swallow-tailed Kite** was reported at Red Toad and Theodore Roads, Cecil County on July 25 (Susan Eggert). Bob Ringler found **Bald Eagles**, an adult and a near-adult, at Liberty Lake on July 29, and noted that sightings are increasing there in recent years. Jan Reese found a **Northern Harrier** at Royal Oak on June 2 and a **Broad-winged Hawk**, carrying a Mourning Dove, near Friendship, Anne Arundel County on July 3. Bonnie Ott found a family group of six **American Kestrels** at Rockburn Branch on July 6.

**Wild Turkeys, Rails, Killdeer, Oystercatchers.** Four half-grown, still somewhat downy, and flightless **Wild Turkeys** were checked off during the Madison BBS on June 25 (Armistead), and 4 adult and 7 young turkeys were at Federalsburg in June and July (Glime). Five **Clapper Rails**, including 2 young, were at Cornfield Harbor, St. Mary's County on July 1 (Craig), 1 adult and 2 coal-black, downy young were near Bishop's Head, Dorchester County on July 2 (Armistead, Taylor), and another Clapper Rail was noted near Grasonville, pretty far north, on July 9 (Jett, Stasz). Two **Soras** were calling at the Easton sewage ponds on July 28, a location where they have been breeding (Armistead). Jan Reese found a dead **Common Moorhen** on the highway at Bethlehem, Caroline County on July 5. **Killdeer** included 16 at Loch Raven on June 28, and 29 there on July 4 (Simon+), 25 at Liberty Lake on July 15 (Ringler), 70 at Blackwater on July 29 (Armistead, Baldwin,

Todd), and 35 at North Branch on July 31 (Twigg). Harry Armistead found 7 **American Oystercatchers** in sight from one spot on Barren Island on June 3 and 6 on Spring Island on July 2. Six **Black-necked Stilts** were at Deal Island WMA on July 10 (Armistead).

**Sandpipers.** Single **Greater Yellowlegs** were at Blackwater and near Honga on June 3 (Armistead), and 4 **Willets** were at Poplar Island on June 17 (Armistead, Miles, Taylor). A **Spotted Sandpiper** was present at Choptank through June (Ford), the last spring migrant noted at Piney Run was on June 1 (Ringler), 1 was at Blackwater on June 3, also a probable late migrant (Armistead), and 13 fall migrant Spotted Sandpipers were at Easton on July 28 (Armistead). **Upland Sandpipers** made a good showing with 2 near Ingleside on July 9 (Jett, Stasz), 20 there on July 16 (Ringler, Stasz, Iliff, Jett), 4 at PRNAS on July 18 (Rambo, Lister), and 3 at Ell Downes Road in Queen Anne's County on July 23 (Czaplak). Patty Craig notched 13 **Whimbrels** just north of Point Lookout SP on July 26, and Harry Armistead found 3 **Ruddy Turnstones** at Barren Island on June 3. A **Red Knot** was at Ocean City on July 22 (Czaplak), and 4 **Sanderlings** were observed at Barren Island on June 3 (Armistead). The first migrant **Western Sandpiper** was noted at Remington Farms, Kent County on July 16 (Ringler, Stasz, Iliff, Jett). Interesting **Least Sandpiper** sightings were 1 at North Branch on July 2 (Twigg), 1 at Loch Raven on July 3 (Simon), and 4 at Deal Island WMA on July 10 (Armistead). **Stilt Sandpipers** included 6 at Deal Island WMA on July 10 (Armistead), 1 at Blackwater on July 22 (Czaplak), and 6 at Blackwater on July 29 (Armistead, Baldwin, Todd). **Short-billed Dowitchers** were 2 at Barren Island on June 3 (Armistead), 6 at Cornfield Harbor, St. Mary's County on July 2 (Craig, Bishop), 1 at Deal Island WMA on July 10 (Armistead), and 8 at Blackwater on July 29 (Armistead, Baldwin, Todd).

**Gulls, Terns.** A total of 36 **Laughing Gulls**, with 5 nests, were at Barren Island on June 3, and 20 adults, along with 1 nest with an egg, were present at Spring Island on July 2 (Armistead, Taylor). Thirty-five Laughing Gulls in basic plumage were at Tilghman Island on June 11 (Reese). Another Laugher was near Lake Elkhorn on July 10 (Wilkinson), and 1 was at Northgate, Cecil County on July 30 (Griffith). **Ring-billed Gulls** included 1 at Loch Raven on June 2 (Simon), 157 at Perry Point, Cecil County on June 3 (Griffith), 2 adults at St. Michaels on June 22 (Reese), 1 at Loch Raven on June 28 (Simon), 1 immature through the summer at Piney Run, the first known to stay that long, and the first migrant at Eldersburg on June 29 (Ringler), 2 adults displaying at Bellevue on July 3 (Armistead), and 140 at Tilghman Island on July 30 (Reese). Harry Armistead surveyed **Herring Gull** nests this summer on various islands in Dorchester County reporting: 27 nests with several eggs at Barren Island on June 3 with a total of 262 birds observed, and a huge colony at Spring Island with an estimated 240 pairs present July 2, with 32 nests and scores of flightless young. Two **Great Black-backed Gulls** were at Perry Point, Cecil County on June 3 (Griffith). Thirty-seven Great Black-backeds and a nest with 2 eggs were tallied at Barren Island on June 3 and 30 adults, with at least 3 large, flightless young were at Spring Island on July 2 (Armistead, Taylor). Mary Twigg reported 3 **Caspian Terns** at Rocky Gap SP on June 29, an adult in winter plumage was at Triadelphia on July 22 (Chestem, Osenton), and 1 Caspian was at Tilghman Island on July 30 (Reese). A **Royal Tern** was at Denton on July 14 (Hewitt), and 6 were counted at Elliott Island, Dorchester County on July 29 (Armistead, Baldwin, Todd). **Forster's Terns** included 2 at Cecilton on June 15 (Griffith, David Holmes) and 2 at Loch Raven on June 28 (Simon). Harry Armistead reported a large colony of mostly Forster's,

with some Common Terns, on a small island just south of Barren Island with an estimated 329 pairs nesting. Harry also spotted 2 **Black Skimmers** on a sand bar on Tar Bay on June 3, but no sign of breeding was observed; he found 19 skimmers at Deal Island on July 10.

*Whip-poor-wills, Woodpeckers, Flycatchers.* A nice count of twenty **Whip-poor-wills** was made at Elk Neck State Forest in Cecil County on June 17 (Griffith, Kelly Powers, Marcia Whitmyre). Reese found a **Red-headed Woodpecker** at Royal Oak on June 2, and observed a male **Hairy Woodpecker** feeding a fledgling at St. Michaels on June 29. Ringler reported an **Acadian Flycatcher** at a nest with young at Morgan Run in Carroll County on July 8. A **Great Crested Flycatcher** nest with 4 eggs was discovered at St. Michaels on June 14 (Reese). An unusual sighting of a **Gray Kingbird** was reported at Point Lookout SP on July 22 (Craig), and it was reported there again on July 23 (Bob Boxwell, Craig).

*Horned Larks, Swallows, Blue Jay.* Jan Reese noted a flock of 18 **Horned Larks** at Centreville on July 14, and Ethel Engle estimated over 250 **Purple Martins** at Tanyard on July 30. A single **Tree Swallow** was at Barren Island on the unusual date of June 3 (Armistead). Jim Wilkinson spotted 2 Tree Swallows at Gateway Business Park in Howard County on July 9-10, and 3 **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** were at Holland Island on July 2 (Armistead, Taylor). Early migrant **Bank Swallows** included 2 on Holland Island on July 2 (Armistead, Taylor), 1 at Deal Island WMA on July 10 (Armistead), and 1 at Chaffers Mill Road, Howard County on July 15 (Wilkinson). A possible migrant **Blue Jay**, found by Jan Reese at Tilghman Island on July 30, was an interesting sighting.

*Chickadees, Nuthatches, Creepers.* Connie Skipper found a **Black-capped Chickadee** feeding young along Rock Lodge Road, McHenry on June 9. Reese found a **Brown-headed Nuthatch** nest with 4 young in a bird box on the lawn of Lorraine and Mike Kozel at St. Michaels on June 8. A **Brown Creeper** was carrying food to a nest with young at Swallow Falls SP on May 28 (Ringler+).

*Wrens, Thrushes, Loggerhead Shrike.* A **Winter Wren** was discovered at Sang Run—Cranesville Road in Garrett County on June 10 (Skipper), and 135 **Marsh Wrens** were tallied at Deal Island WMA on July 10 (Armistead). A late migrant **Swainson's Thrush** was at Bellevue on June 4 (Armistead), and 8 different male **Hermit Thrushes** were singing along Rock Lodge Road, McHenry on July 14 (Skipper). Two **Loggerhead Shrikes** were located by George Jett at Masser Road, Frederick County on June 24.

*Warblers.* Connie Skipper found a **Blue-winged Warbler** along Potomac Camp Road, Deer Park in Garrett County on June 5, and a **Lawrence's Warbler**, singing a Blue-winged song, was discovered on June 11 along the railroad tracks west of Route 97 at the Carroll/Howard county line (Dave & Maureen Harvey). Seven **Chestnut-sided Warblers**, with 1 feeding young, were along Rock Lodge Road, McHenry on June 22, 12 different males were singing there on July 7, and 3 were there, including 1 feeding young, on July 14 (Skipper). Connie Skipper checked off a male **Yellow-rumped Warbler** singing along Rock Lodge Road, Garrett County on July 14 and 5 **Black-throated Green Warblers**, 4 singing males and a female gathering rootlets, along Rock Lodge Road, McHenry on July 14. An **Ovenbird** nest with 3 large nestlings was located near Starr on June 20 (Reese).

*Summer Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Dickcissels.* Dave and Maureen Harvey listed a **Summer Tanager** at Soldier's Delight on June 17, and several **Rose-**

**breasted Grosbeaks** were discovered along Fishing Creek Road, Frederick County on June 24 (Jett). Bob Ringler heard a **Dickcissel** near Detour on June 4, saw 1 there on June 10, and saw 1 and heard another there on June 11. The field was mowed the next week and no more were to be found. A Dickcissel was heard singing near Ingleside on July 9 (Jett, Stasz).

**Sparrows.** Bob Ringler noted that his only Carroll County sighting of a **Savannah Sparrow** was near Bruceville on June 4. A couple of other Savannah reports were turned in, 3 at the north end of Shriver Road in Frederick County on June 25 (Wilkinson), and 2 at Cecilton on August 2 (Griffith, Gant). Once again Connie Skipper studied Garrett County **Henslow's Sparrows**, reporting 6 at Potomac Camp Road, Deer Park and 2 along Combination Road, Deer Park on June 5. During June 1—July 21, she banded 10 adults and 8 juveniles along Rock Lodge Road and identified 15 singing males on territories. On July 17 she found 1 on a different reclaimed strip mine along Rock Lodge Road. Dave Czaplak noted a Garrett County Henslow's at the Glades on June 10. With a lot of pishing, Harry Armistead tallied 337 **Seaside Sparrows** at Deal Island WMA on July 10. Two **Swamp Sparrows** were singing at the Kings Creek Preserve near Easton on June 10 (Reese), and 6, including 2 feeding young, were along Rock Lodge Road, McHenry on June 16 (Skipper). Dave Weesner reported an adult **White-throated Sparrow** at the feeder of Harold and Dinnie Winger in Hagerstown during June 20-26.

**Bobolinks, Grackles, Pine Siskin, Exotics.** Bob Ringler found a **Bobolink** at Keysville on June 4 and 3 there on June 11, before the field was mowed, and another at a different site at Keysville on June 17. Several Bobolinks were in Frederick County in the Fourpoints area on June 24 and along Francis Scott Key Road on June 25 (Jett). Other Bobolinks were 6 at a third site in Keysville on June 25, probably including the birds that had been forced from the first site when it was mowed (Ringler), 2 along Shriver Road and 1 along Fourpoints Bridge Road in Frederick County on June 25 (Wilkinson), 19 seen along Rock Lodge Road in Garrett County on July 19 (Skipper), 5 migrants at Morgan Run in Carroll County on July 22 (Ringler), 1 at Easton on July 28 (Armistead), and 3 at Tilghman Island on July 30 (Reese). A pair of **Boat-tailed Grackles** with 1 young at a nest were found at Tilghman Island on June 11 (Reese), and 6350 **Common Grackles** were tallied at Blackwater on July 29 (Armistead, Baldwin, Todd). A **Pine Siskin** was at Swallow Falls SP on July 16 (Czaplak). Finally, a male **Green Peafowl** was observed at the Nature Conservancy's Kings Creek Preserve, in Talbot County on June 10 (Reese).

9763 Early Spring Way, Columbia, Maryland 21046

## ANNUAL REPORTS OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

### ATLAS COMMITTEE

The atlas page proofs are due to us from the printer approximately June 19. MOS is supposed to return them by July 29. We have been told the Atlas will be published in November or December [later the estimated date was changed to January 1997].

John Malcolm, Chairman

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The following grants were approved by the MOS Education Committee between June 1, 1995 and May 1, 1996:

### CHAPTER GRANTS:

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>1. Allegany County Chapter.</b> To purchase 4 pairs of binoculars for bird walks at the Rocky Gap State Park Nature Center. Their naturalist is a member of MOS.  |           |
|  | \$200.00  |
| <b>2. Anne Arundel County Chapter.</b> To purchase slides for a slide show program to be given to local groups.  |           |
|  | \$200.00  |
| <b>3. Baltimore Chapter.</b> 6 subscriptions for the Audubon Adventure magazine for elementary school classrooms.  |           |
|  | \$200.00  |
| <b>4. Carroll County Chapter.</b> To purchase Birds of North America software for visitor center exhibit at Bear Branch Nature Center/Hashawa in Westminster. Also 3 pairs of binoculars for nature walks. |           |
|  | \$200.00  |
| <b>5. Harford County Chapter.</b> To purchase bird identification posters for county high schools, and bird slides for presentations to local groups.  |           |
|  | \$200.00  |
| <b>6. Kent County Chapter.</b> Funds to pay for a Wildfowl Trust "raptor program" to be presented to the students at Rock Hall Elementary School.  |           |
|  | \$ 50.00  |
| <b>7. Montgomery Chapter.</b> Funds to be used toward a permanent educational display about birds.   |           |
|  | \$100.00  |
| <b>8. Wicomico County Chapter.</b> 6 subscriptions for the Audubon Adventure magazine for elementary school classrooms.  |           |
|  | \$200.00  |
| Total given for Chapter Grants   | \$1350.00 |
| Total budgeted for Chapter Grants  | \$3200.00 |
| Funds not spent for Chapter Grants   | \$1850.00 |

### SPECIAL GRANTS:

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <i>Multimedia Bird Book</i> computer software to loan schools in Maryland   |          |
|   | \$ 55.95 |
| <b>PARTNERS IN FLIGHT</b>   |          |
| Money to support Partners in Art, reaching 575 students in Maryland and 575 students in South and Central America |          |
|   | \$200.00 |
| <b>ASA WRIGHT NATURE CENTER IN TRINIDAD</b>   |          |
| Bird video for their local environmental education training center.   |          |
|   | \$ 15.00 |
| <b>WORCESTER COUNTY SCHOOL</b>  |          |
| Add wildlife plants and bird feeders to bird sanctuary/outdoor classroom at a school in Berlin, Maryland.         |          |
|   | \$200.00 |

## MARYLAND STATE ENVIROTHON

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| To help fund the state competition                                | \$400.00  |
| For one case (24) of <i>Field Guide to Birds of North America</i> | \$200.00  |
|   |           |
| Total for Special Grants  | \$1070.95 |
| Total for 8 Chapter Grants  | \$1350.00 |
|   |           |
| Total for Both  | \$2420.95 |

## COSTS FOR THE CHAN ROBBINS COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUES AND CEREMONY

Total cost not available yet and will be carried over into next year's budget.

## GLADYS COLE MEMORIAL AT IRISH GROVE

Total costs not yet available and will be listed in next year's budget.

*Linda Bystrak*, Chairman**LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The Long Range Planning Committee continues to provide assistance to other committees and to state officers. This year we worked briefly with the Education Committee to plan the MOS-sponsored trail at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center honoring Chandler S. Robbins' 50 years of service with the U.S. Department of the Interior.

We commend the officers and committee chairs for making a prompt effort to meet some of the MOS 50-year recommendations detailed in this committee's 1995 report. Of the five stated goals, significant strides have already been made in reaching the following three: (1) Youth involvement; (2) Publications' timeliness, and (3) The protection of birds and their habitats.

The revitalized Education Committee is making a major effort to reach out to youth. The Scholarship Committee continues its mission to influence young people. The careful cultivation of this age group should bear significant fruit eventually.

With the recent more timely publication of *Maryland Birdlife* and the continued lively and thorough coverage of activities by *The Maryland Yellowthroat*, members are being kept abreast of Society recreational, research, and conservation activities. The recent publication of the revised edition of the *Field List of the Birds of Maryland* has given state birders a reference of unparalleled quality and usefulness. We congratulate the authors for producing a truly outstanding publication. The "yellow book" will again be the envy of birders nationwide.

As part of MOS's commitment to protect birds and their habitats, the Sanctuary Committee continues to oversee MOS lands responsibly. In addition, the Society's participation in Partners in Flight and, more recently, in the American Bird Conservancy are measures of our increasing desire to be vocal and visible in bird protection in a larger sphere. State, chapter, and individual support of FUNDAECO and other organizations preserving wintering habitats reflects an increasing sophistication in our understanding of bird preservation.

This responsiveness to long range goals augers well for the continued health of the organization.

*Joanne K. Solem*, Chairman

**MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.**  
**FINANCIAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR**  
**MAY 1, 1995 THROUGH APRIL 30, 1996**

| <u>ITEM</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> | <u>ACTUAL</u> |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|
|-------------|---------------|---------------|

**OPERATING FUND**

**INCOME:**

|                                |               |                  |
|--------------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Dues                           | 20,000        | 19,587.50        |
| Transfer from                  |               |                  |
| Sanctuary Endowment            | 630           |                  |
| Investment Income              | 750           | 1,563.79         |
| Publications Income            | 1,000         | 238.80           |
| Mail Permit Contribution       | 43            | 37.50            |
| Membership Pins                | 100           | 331.00           |
| Miscellaneous                  |               |                  |
| Environmental Fund of Maryland |               | 3,681.67         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                   | <b>22,023</b> | <b>25,440.26</b> |

**EXPENSES:**

|                          |               |                  |
|--------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Publications Committee   |               |                  |
| <i>Maryland Birdlife</i> | 8,850         | 6,595.46         |
| <i>Yellowthroat</i>      | 7,000         | 8,784.71         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>             | <b>15,800</b> | <b>15,380.70</b> |

**ADMINISTRATIVE AND OFFICE:**

|                           |              |                 |
|---------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| President's Expenses      | 100          | 45.78           |
| Vice President's Expenses | 50           |                 |
| Secretary's Expenses      | 75           | 60.00           |
| Treasurer's Expenses      | 75           | 106.48          |
| Executive Secretary       | 2,400        | 2,425.00        |
| Postage                   | 300          | 329.84          |
| Bulk Mailing Permits      | 255          | 255.00          |
| Membership List Database  | 550          | 627.57          |
| Printing and Duplication  | 300          | 168.45          |
| Office Supplies           | 200          | 8.39            |
| Publicity and Awards      | 500          | 26.78           |
| Affiliations              | 225          | 225.00          |
| Liability Insurance       | 550          | 550.00          |
| MOS Telephone             | 500          | 486.36          |
| Contingencies             | 500          | 529.46          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>              | <b>6,630</b> | <b>5,844.11</b> |

## COMMITTEE RELATED EXPENSES:

|                        |              |               |
|------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Budget Committee       | 25           |               |
| Conservation Committee | 500          |               |
| Education Committee    | 100          | 462.83        |
| Library Committee      | 500          |               |
| Conference Committee   | 1,200        | 10.21         |
| Gifts Committee        | 50           |               |
| Long Range Planning    | 20           |               |
| Nominating Committee   | 50           |               |
| Speakers Bureau        | 100          |               |
| Records Committee      | 250          |               |
| Research Committee     | 100          |               |
| Scholarship Committee  |              | 54.38         |
| Contingencies          | 200          |               |
| May Count Coordination | 50           |               |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>3,095</b> | <b>527.42</b> |

## CONFERENCE:

|                 |          |           |
|-----------------|----------|-----------|
| 1995 Conference | Income   | 12,701.50 |
|                 | Expenses | 25,946.98 |
| 1996 Conference | Income   | 13,990.00 |
|                 | Expenses | 490.89    |

## OPERATING FUND — OTHER FUNDS

Costa Rica - *OTS* Donation

## Maryland Atlas:

|          |          |
|----------|----------|
| Begin    | 2,589.27 |
| Expenses | 0.00     |
| Balance  | 2,589.27 |

## Atlas—Chesapeake Bay Trust

|          |          |
|----------|----------|
| Begin    | 5,134.49 |
| Expenses | 0.00     |
| Balance  | 5,134.49 |

Rain Forest Challenge—*FUNDAECO*

|                               |          |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| 1994/95 Income                | 5,802.50 |
| Total sent to <i>FUNDAECO</i> | 5,802.50 |

Brazil *IEF*

|         |        |
|---------|--------|
| Begin   | 50.00  |
| Income  | 750.00 |
| Balance | 800.00 |

## MOS Brochures

|         |          |
|---------|----------|
| Balance | 2,879.26 |
|---------|----------|

## MOS Conference

|          |
|----------|
| 3,000.00 |
|----------|

## Index, Maryland Birdlife:

|          |          |
|----------|----------|
| Balance  | 2,740.00 |
| Expenses | 1,400.00 |
| Balance  | 1,340.00 |

| <u>ITEM</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> | <u>ACTUAL</u> |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|
|-------------|---------------|---------------|

**SANCTUARY ENDOWMENT FUND**

## INCOME:

|                 |              |                 |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Dividends       | 3,300        | 4,181.41        |
| Contributions   | 100          | 1,393.00        |
| Life Membership | 400          |                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>    | <b>3,800</b> | <b>5,574.41</b> |

## EXPENSES:

|                            |              |              |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Bond Maint.                | 15           | 15.00        |
| Transfer to Operating Fund | 630          |              |
| Transfer to Sanctuary Fund | 2,655        |              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               | <b>3,300</b> | <b>15.00</b> |

**SANCTUARY FUND**

## INCOME:

|                        |              |                |
|------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Transfer               | 2,655        |                |
| Interest Income        | 850          | 274.57         |
| Use Fees — Irish Grove | 500          | 465.00         |
| Carey Run              | 1,500        |                |
| Signs                  | 100          | 121.00         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>5,605</b> | <b>860.57*</b> |

## EXPENSES:

|                          |       |           |
|--------------------------|-------|-----------|
| Irish Grove              | 4,150 | 4,947.24  |
| Carey Run                |       | 303.47*   |
| Liability Insurance      | 800   | 868.00    |
| Contingencies            | 2,000 |           |
| Total Sanctuary Expenses | 6,950 | 6,118.71* |

\*The income and expenses for Carey Run reflect income received by or expenses paid by the MOS treasurer.

**SANCTUARY MAINTENANCE FUND**

|         |           |
|---------|-----------|
| Balance | 23,085.92 |
| Div/Int | 1,468.36  |
| Balance | 24,554.28 |

## EXPENSES:

|             |           |
|-------------|-----------|
| Irish Grove |           |
| BALANCE     | 24,554.28 |

| <u>ITEM</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> | <u>ACTUAL</u> |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|
|-------------|---------------|---------------|

**SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT FUND**

## INCOME:

|                     |              |                   |
|---------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Contributions       | 200          | 172.00            |
| Div/Int             | 3,500        | 4,878.57          |
| Carryover from 1996 | 147.47       |                   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>        | <b>3,700</b> | <b>5,198.04**</b> |

\*\* Amount available for Summer 1997 MOS Scholarships

**SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

## INCOME:

## Summer 1996 Income:

|                                      |                 |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Div/Int                              | 4,157.47        |
| Gibson-Mendinhal Scholarship         | 700.00          |
| Orville Crowder Memorial Scholarship | 700.00          |
| <b>Total Income</b>                  | <b>5,557.47</b> |

## Scholarship Expenses:

|                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Summer 1996 Scholarships | 5,400.00        |
| Maintenance Fee          | 15.00           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>             | <b>5,415.00</b> |

**RESEARCH ENDOWMENT FUND**

## INCOME:

|               |       |            |
|---------------|-------|------------|
| Contributions | 100   |            |
| Div/Int       | 2,200 | 3,405.46** |

\*\*Amount available for 1996/97 Research Grants

## EXPENSES:

|                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Grants          | 4,460        |
| Maintenance Fee | 15           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>    | <b>4,475</b> |

**EDUCATION FUND**

|                       |                  |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| BEGINNING BALANCE     | 32,472.54        |
| Div/Int               | 2,027.64         |
| Balance               | 34,500.18        |
| Education Grants      | 3,116.83         |
| <b>ENDING BALANCE</b> | <b>31,383.35</b> |

## FUTURE ATLAS ACCOUNT

|                   |          |
|-------------------|----------|
| BEGINNING BALANCE | 2,379.24 |
| <b>INCOME:</b>    |          |
| Div/Int           | 1,506.04 |
| TOTAL             | 3,885.28 |
| <b>EXPENSES:</b>  |          |
| Maintenance Fee   | 15.00    |
| ENDING BALANCE    | 3,870.28 |

## UNASSIGNED BEQUESTS

|                   |           |
|-------------------|-----------|
| BEGINNING BALANCE | 57,050.52 |
| Div/Int           | 3,034.11  |
| ENDING BALANCE    | 61,084.63 |

## YELLOWBOOK UPDATE FUND

|         |           |
|---------|-----------|
| BALANCE | 11,000.00 |
|---------|-----------|

*Jeff Metter, Treasurer*

## RESEARCH COMMITTEE

At the close of the fiscal year 1994/95 the MOS research grant fund contained \$4,490.84. During the 1995/96 fiscal year two research grants were awarded. Hillary Stern received \$3,000 for "Collection and compilation of hematological data in selected Maryland waterbirds." Dave Brinker and Matt Rowe received \$1,460 for "Winter movements and habitat use of Northern Saw-whet Owls on Assateague Island, Maryland." No other proposals were received. The income during fiscal year 1995/96 from interest on the research endowment amounted to \$3,194.96. The balance in the MOS Research Grant Fund at the beginning of the 1996/97 fiscal year was \$3,225.30.

The Research Committee organized the 8th annual afternoon paper session for the 1996 conference. Abstracts of the papers presented were included in the conference program. Attendance at the Saturday afternoon paper session was good with approximately 40 people in attendance.

*David F. Brinker, Chairman*

## SANCTUARY COMMITTEE

The Sanctuary Committee conducted three workdays this past year. Two were at Irish Grove, the fall workday on the weekend of October 28-29, 1995 and the spring one on the weekend of April 13-14, 1996. The other workday was held on April 27, 1996 at Carey Run. The Committee thanks the many volunteers who come out and make these workdays a success.

Lola Oberman, who for several years has been handling the sale of signs for Private Sanctuaries, retired from this position. The Committee thanks Lola for a job well done. Karen Morley, from the Baltimore Chapter, has graciously volunteered to be Lola's replacement.

In closing I want to mention that in July of 1995 the Sanctuary Committee lost a long-time, hard-working member when Dan Folk of the Allegany Chapter passed away. For over 20 years, Dan, with his wife Charlotte, saw to the upkeep and use of Carey Run Sanctuary. Everyone who stayed overnight at Carey Run met Dan when he would come out to make sure that everything was working OK. He had lots of stories about Carey Run and the history of the area. At the annual workdays he greeted all the volunteers who came to help. He will be missed.

*Dotty Mumford, Chairman*

## SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Eleven applications were received this year, and eight scholarships were awarded. Two of the scholarship winners plan to attend the Annual Conference dinner on Saturday evening. Our committee has done an excellent job. We expect to do an even better job next year by expanding our recruitment. The 1996 Ornithology Scholarship winners were as follows:

Chandler S. Robbins Scholarship: Bruce Barbarasch, Program Coordinator, National Aquarium, Baltimore.

Eleanor C. Robbins Scholarship: Sharon Overholser, Animal Keeper, Bird Department, Baltimore Zoo.

The Ecology Scholarship winners were as follows:

Orville Crowder Memorial Scholarship: Ruth E. Wilsey, Environmental Education Teacher, Harford Glen Environmental Center.

Gibson-Mendinhal Scholarship: Mary Ellen Dore, DNR, Annapolis.

Helen Miller Memorial Scholarships (4): Bobbie Miyasaki, Science Coordinator, Bryn Mawr School, Baltimore; Mellissa A. Zeman, University of Maryland student, Maryland Science Center; Heather Glenn, Teacher, Berlin; Katie Eberhart, Teacher, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Salisbury.

*Mrs. Isa Sieracki, Chairman*

## ANNUAL REPORTS OF CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

### ANNE ARUNDEL BIRD CLUB

The Chapter began and ended its year with picnics at Jug Bay and Meyer's Station. The well-attended monthly meetings had guest lectures on a wide variety of topics, including Birds of the Aleutians, Birds of the Bahamas, Wild Turkeys, Butterflies and Dragonflies. Paul Engman presented a program on owls for our annual Robert E. Heise, Jr. Wildlife Lecture at the Blue Heron Room in Quiet Waters Park. All funds raised at this lecture were donated to the MOS Scholarship and Sanctuary Funds.

Despite several cancellations due to inclement weather, the Club conducted thirty local field trips. Our field trip co-chairs Peter Hanan, Sue Ricciardi, and Larry Zoller planned a wide variety of trips appealing to all members, from novice birders to experts. The 82 different participants saw a total of 231 species on these trips. In addition, Peter Hanan led extended trips to Michigan and Arizona which yielded many much sought species including Northern Hawk-Owl, Snowy Owl, Elegant Tropic, and White-eared and Violet-crowned Hummingbirds. Club members also participated in the May Count and the Annapolis Christmas Count.

Al Haury again helped organize and conduct our annual bird seed sales held in conjunction with Friends of Quiet Waters Park. The profits from the sale greatly strengthened the Chapter's finances.

The Chapter continued its active participation in community activities. We participated in Earth Day celebrations at Quiet Waters Park and the Naval Academy. Together with local conservation organizations we co-sponsored a lecture series at Quiet Waters Park. Club members gave bird lectures at local schools and civic organizations and also led public bird walks at Sandy Point and Quiet Waters Park.

John and Helen Ford were elected Honorary Life Members in recognition of their years of service and their dedication to furthering the objectives of the Anne Arundel Bird Club and the MOS. This year's Conservation Award was given to John Schorpp in recognition of his work preserving habitat and protecting nesting Ospreys at the Naval Antenna Facility at Greenbury Point.

*Stephen Hult, President*

### BALTIMORE BIRD CLUB

The Baltimore Bird Club (BBC) is the host chapter for the MOS conference this year. The event is being organized by Mary Byers and her many helpers. Their dedication and hard work will provide everyone with a wonderful experience. Thanks must also go to trip leaders from the BBC and other chapters.

The BBC cooperated with a number of organizations, providing volunteers and materials for educational and informational purposes. BBC members staffed

booths, passed out informational materials, and answered questions at Rocky Point Park during "Coastweek," at the Maryland Science Center on its "Bird Day," at the National Aquarium on "International Migratory Bird Day," and at the Carrie Murray Outdoor Education Campus on its "Earth Day." Individual recognition goes to Joy Wheeler, Mark and Leanne Pemburn, Terry and Roberta Ross, Anneke Davis, Carolyn Webb, and Betsy Taylor for volunteering their time and expertise.

Students from Baltimore City and County schools have always benefited from the BBC. This year, students from 17 schools (1,290 students) visited Cylburn Arboretum. Volunteers led bird and nature walks around the arboretum and gave workshops at various schools and colleges. Six schools received subscriptions to Audubon Adventures (thanks to MOS). Again, special recognition goes to Joy Wheeler, Patsy Perlman, Mike Baker, and others.

On the technological side, the BBC web page on the internet was created and is currently maintained by our webmaster, Terry Ross. Not only up-to-date information on interesting sightings is on the web, but also the BBC trip schedule. Chip Notes issues, minutes from the Board meetings, and useful information relating to birds. The web address is <http://204.255.212.10/~tross/baltbird.html>.

Information on bird populations gathered by Leanne Pemburn and others for the Gwynn Falls—Leakin Park Ornithological Survey proved useful to the DNR and the Heritage Program in their planning for the area's future. The BBC Site Guide is taking shape and being reviewed by several experts. Thanks to members who provided descriptions of various sites.

Again, many thanks to the volunteer members of BBC for their other contributions, such as the maintenance and upgrade of the Cylburn Museum, the feeding of birds at Cylburn, and participating at various meetings on environmental issues.

*Sukon Kanchanaraksa, President*

## CARROLL COUNTY BIRD CLUB

The Carroll County Bird Club's 1995-1996 season was busy and fun. Our eight monthly meetings at Carroll Community College featured speakers who honed our warbler (Pete Webb) and gull (Jim Stasz) identification skills, taught us more about American Kestrels (Mark Hoffman) and Maryland butterflies (Dr. Dick Smith), took us on birding trips to South Africa (via film, hosted by Dave Harvey), the Bahamas (Tony White), and the American prairie (Dr. Robert Trever), and explained the mysterious horseshoe crab mating that brings the phenomenal shorebird migration to Delaware Bay (Dr. Ben Poscover). Thanks to Laura Tarbell for coordinating refreshments and the many members who treated us with goodies!

Club volunteers (Bob Ringler, Jerry and Laura Tarbell, Bill Kulp, Jr., Dave Hudgins, Dave and Maureen Harvey) led both planned and spontaneous field trips to Carroll County hot spots as well as more distant trips to view raptor migration (Hawk Mountain, Town Hill, and Fort Smallwood) and winter concentrations

(Conowingo Dam and Ocean City). Other special trips included Jug Bay and the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. It was a cold, rainy day on Jug Bay in October when the irrepressible Greg Kearns took us on a pontoon boat trip for Soras; his enthusiasm and his kept promise of a Sora-in-hand made it a fine day in spite of the chilly drizzle! In April, Peter Osenton led us on a non-public trail near the National Wildlife Visitor Center at the Patuxent Research Center where we had a remarkable encounter with dozens of Palm Warblers, many other spring migrants, winter lingerers, and local species. We enjoyed a tour of the Visitor Center, a quick tailgate lunch, and a walk around Cash Lake afterwards. We also had two fabulous weekend birding trips: New Year's at Ocean City and Memorial Day at Carey Run Sanctuary.

Bill Kulp answered questions about birding and distributed MOS literature at Carroll Community College's Expo for community nonprofit groups in November, and both he and Laura Tarbell helped about 60 youngsters make construction paper birds at Carrollton Mall for the Children's Fair in May. Several members participated in the second annual fall count, the winter count (we particularly enjoyed Kathy Harden's post-count dinner and tally), and May bird counts. Members represented the club's interests by sitting on a planning committee for a combination hike-bike-bluebird trail at Carroll Community College (Erma Gebb and Sue Yingling) and speaking before the County Commissioners about the proposed Westminster Linear Park (Maureen Harvey).

Our club is pretty close and many friendships have been found and strengthened by shared fun at social events. Our annual January Holiday party was hosted by Sue and Splinter Yingling with great food, high spirits, and hilarious games, followed by a sobering drive home in the first 1996 blizzard! Our summer picnic was on a beautiful June afternoon, hosted by Doris and Bill Kulp, Jr., with more great food, high spirits, horse-drawn buggy rides, and lawn sports.

With just over 40 members, our club is fairly small. Thanking all the volunteers who made club events so successful would really end up being about equal to our membership list! Special thanks to our past presidents (Bob Ringler, Bill Kulp, Jr., and Melinda Byrd), the 1995-96 officers (V.P. Laura Tarbell, Treas. Barbara Gaffney, Sec'y Dave Hudgins, State Dir. Sue Yingling) for advice and moral support as well as jobs well done.

*Maureen F. Harvey, President*

## **CECIL CHAPTER**

The Cecil County Chapter of MOS, now in its third year, has become an active and energetic group.

Chapter members participate in Christmas Counts in several Maryland and Delaware counties, as well as the annual May and Midwinter counts. In addition, the chapter established a hawk watch at Turkey Point which has been quite successful. We are presently seeking funding to erect a platform at Turkey Point to increase visibility at the hawk watch.

Chapter members have also assisted Dave Brinker of the Maryland DNR with two ongoing projects: (1) maintaining fences and signage at a Least Tern colony

on an island in the Susquehanna Flats, and (2) expanding his study of Saw-whet Owl migration by establishing a banding station at Turkey Point. This banding station was responsible for the capture, banding, and safe release of 334 saw-whets in its first season.

Field trips have ranged from walks in the Elkton Town Park, to trips to Cape May, NJ, and day-long excursions along the Maryland-Delaware Coast in search of wintering waterfowl.

In conjunction with Cecil Community College, the chapter has established educational programs for people of all ages. We have an annual elderhostel program for seniors, a "Kidz in Kollege" program for children 8-14, and an adult continuing education program available at the Cecil county campus.

*Gary Griffith, President*

## FREDERICK CHAPTER

The Frederick Chapter offered a full and varied program of activities that were both enjoyable and well attended. The rough winter weather cancelled one regular meeting and one outing.

We continued to meet monthly at the Frederick High School although we found ourselves displaced from our traditional meeting room of many years. We met in somewhat unsatisfactory space of the science labs, but expect to return to our old space next year.

This was the first year of our expanded regular monthly calendar, adding a regular meeting in May and moving our picnic meeting to June. Our topics (and speakers) were: The Galapagos (Ian Cornelius), Sparrows and Finches (Bill Oberman), Backyard Biodiversity (Craig Tufts), Bald Eagles (Glenn Therres), Birding Argentina and Peru (Stauffer Miller), The Galapagos II (Greg Kearns), Spring Wildflowers (Bob Johnson), and Black Skimmers (Dave Brinker). The June picnic meeting was held again sat Pinecliff Park on the Monocacy River.

Ten field trips were offered to a variety of locations in the county, neighboring counties, and to Delaware and Virginia. We also participated in the Catoctin and Sugarloaf Christmas Counts, the Frederick County Midwinter Count, and the Frederick County May Count. A day-long clean-up outing to the Ballanger Creek Park resulted in removal of several truckloads of debris and trash and a number of trail improvements.

On May 4 the Chapter hosted the MOS Board meeting.

Plans for next year's program include a continued expanded offering of program meetings and an enlarged selection of organized outings.

*Bob Johnson, President*

## HARFORD COUNTY CHAPTER

The Harford Chapter continued to grow in size and activity through its 47th year. We began the year with our annual picnic at Rocks 4-H Camp with Tom Congersky and many others contributing and preparing an excellent fare. Our annual post-dinner bird walk yielded some interesting birds given the time of day.

Our newsletter, *Wrenderings*, continues to strive for excellence. Editor Les Eastman scans each issue into the World Wide Web. David Webb has contributed an interesting column to each issue summarizing local sightings, which should provide an interesting legacy of Harford's birdlife for generations to come. Many local birders contribute to the column.

Our November meeting featured local amateur naturalist and photographer, Robert Rinker; in his presentation, "Maryland in Living Color," he discussed his pursuits of the many birds he had photographed, describing "behind the scenes" aspects of many of his subjects. Birds of North Central Wyoming, which highlighted our January meeting, presented research and birding experiences of our own David Ziolkowski. The March meeting focused on local habitat preservation with David Miller's presentation on the Harford Land Trust, an organization dedicated to protecting Harford's open spaces. Our final meeting in May featured Dr. L. Scott Johnson on "Hard Lives of Second Wives: An Inside Look at Polygamy of House Wrens." Dr. Johnson gave an excellent discussion of how and why many males at his study site were polygamous, and the underlying benefits for their mates.

The strange winter, with its excessive snowfall, provided many sightings of unusual birds for our area. Many people reported Evening Grosbeaks at their feeders, Saw-whet Owls were seen on the winter counts and throughout the winter, with an unusual number, as well as a Long-eared Owl, reported injured to Wildlife R&R. Early this spring, Debbie Bowers provided many in our club with their first local look at a Townsend's Solitaire, a bird with few records in eastern North America.

At our annual awards presentation, Dr. William McIntosh and Jean and Larry Fry each received the Distinguished Service Award in recognition of their hard work and participation in the club. David Webb received the county Lister of the Year with 224 species seen; Harold Bowling received the Rookie of the Year Award, and Bird of the Year went to the Black Skimmer discovered at Havre de Grace by John Wortman.

We participated with our display at the Havre de Grace Earth Day Celebration at the Decoy Museum on April 20. We had fun talking to many who were interested in our club, and hope to see many as members in the future.

Our emphasis on providing many fun and informative field trips continues to be our goal under our Field Trip Chairman, David Webb. Some of our trips included visits to the Delaware refuges, Carey Run Sanctuary, Gunpowder Delta, the National Zoo, and the National Wildlife Visitor Center at Patuxent. In addition to visits to local hot spots there were specialty trips: a pot-luck shorebird trip, night-hawk watches atop the Bel Air Municipal Garage, and whips-and-owls trips.

We mourn the passing of Joan McIntosh this year. Joan has participated in various ways and will be sincerely missed. A small donation was made in her name at the Hopkins Breast Center where she had spent many volunteer hours. Other donations were given to the Harford Land Trust and Wildlife R&R for their work in helping birds, and a small donation was provided for a local ceramics student for clay used in developing a style of bird house for cavity nesting species.

Looking back, our club had a great year and I had a lot of fun being part of it. None of the work of the club could really come together if not for the help of its officers. Many thanks go to Past President Jean Fry, Editor Les Eastman, Field Trip Chairman David Webb, Vice President Randy Robertson, Recording Secretary Mary Procell, Corresponding Secretary Carole Vangrin, Treasurer Joyce Gorsuch, Dinner Reservations Shirley Geisinger, State Education Representative David Ziolkowski, State Sanctuary Representative Russ Kovach, and our State Directors, Tom Congersky, John Nack, and Joe Vangrin. Thanks to all for your help and enthusiasm.

*Mark S. Johnson, President*

## HOWARD COUNTY CHAPTER

Jane Geuder and her committee planned a full schedule of interesting programs for the nine monthly meetings. Those evenings were made more lively by the presence of the club bookstore managed by Ann Rattereman, a hospitality table overseen by Maud Banks, and frequent special displays created by Martha Chestem. A table of free magazines, articles, brochures, etc., encouraged members to browse and to recycle material. The club newsletter, edited by Darius and Paula Ecker, provided timely information to the membership. A summary of seasonal bird sightings is now a regular feature along with data from all the special bird counts in which our members participate.

Darius Ecker started The Electronic Goldfinch this past year as the Howard County Bird Club went online and now provides access to virtually all the birding links available on the internet.

Bonnie Ott continued to plan an extensive array of field trips. She balanced trips to local "hot spots" with searches for specific types of birds such as waterfowl, hawks, sparrows, and herons. Weekday walks during migration proved popular. Bonnie also volunteered to help individuals locate desired county birds by maintaining a master "want" list for those who wished to pursue their passion of county ticking.

The club provided displays at the Howard County Fair. Many educational presentations by various members were made to school classes, retirees, and other groups using the club's mounted specimens of slide programs.

Conservation emphasis this year focused on actively letting our politicians know that we support things like the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, safe drinking water, National Forests, Wildlands, and keeping health and environmental standards strong. Bob Solem continues to work diligently and has provided updated information to the club on these items as he presses forward in

pushing the club's position on these acts to whichever politician needs to know. This is vital when we are represented by people who ask things like "why is there a need for flowers?", a quote from Roscoe Bartlett (R - 6th Dist, MD).

Numerous chapter members continued active field work with participation in the Triadelphia Christmas Count, Midwinter Count, May Count, and the Fall Count. Seasonal migration records were compiled by Joanne Solem from data submitted by several dozen people. Bird checklists for major parks and open space continue to be compiled under Jane Farrell's direction. The new book on bird finding in Howard County, edited by Joanne Solem, is now available. Members are also working with the Howard County Conservancy surveying the birds, plants, and butterflies at Mt. Pleasant, a 225-acre farm. The 17th annual list of all bird species seen in the county was again compiled by Jane Farrell; the 1995 total was the second highest ever, 232 species.

This marked the 17th year of the club's twice yearly seed sales under the leadership of Eileen Clegg.

Under the direction and organization of Tom Strikwerda and Martha Chestem, our chapter continued to be responsible for mailing *Maryland Birdlife*.

Members of this chapter have spent the year actively chronicling the county's birdlife (along with some other aspects of its natural history). We look forward to continuing this same intense involvement in the coming year.

*David A. Harvey, President*

## **KENT COUNTY CHAPTER**

The Kent County Chapter lost some members and gained new ones during 1995-1996. The net result was a group a bit smaller but no less enthusiastic, that decided to focus on environmental concerns during the year.

The September program "Audubon Summer Ecology Workshop" set the tone. This talk was by Peggy Ford, recipient of the chapter's Gibson-Mendinhal Scholarship which funded her workshop experience. Jed Howell, Kent County High School teacher, spoke on the Envirothon Program. Later programs included "How Watersheds Work" by Worrall "Nick" Carter, "The New River Stewardship: Community, Ecology and Economy" by members of the Chester River Association, "Migration Patterns and Identification of Fall Hawks" by Rick Blom, "Terns" by Claudia Wilds, and "Earthwatch Ornithological Trips" by Daphne Gemmill. Unfortunately, "Assateague: Jewell of the East Coast" by Judy Johnson had to be canceled because of the notorious peninsula blackout.

Other activities included two winter feeder watches, participation in the Audubon Christmas Count (Paul Tolson, compiler), and the spring migration count (Floyd Parks, compiler), an annual dinner and annual picnic, participation in National Hunting and Fishing Day, and the Chestertown Wildlife Exhibition.

Successful field trips included places new to our members—Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary and Horn Point Environmental Program, as well as visits to a duck banding station in Dorchester County and the Pickering Creek Environmental Center.

The chapter received a grant from the state education committee to fund a program of Horsehead Wetlands Center at the Rock Hall Elementary School.

Dolly Minis, a member who studies and records bird calls, conducted several bird walks during the year at Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge and Tuckahoe State Park. Stephen Hitchner continued his monitoring of a bluebird trail on Kinnard Point.

Margaret Blair designed the winning pin for the MOS Convention in June: a kingfisher on an oak leaf. This is the second year she has won this award.

Martha Webster, as Publicity Chairman, got complete coverage of the chapter's activities in the Kent County News.

*Clara Ann Simmons, President*

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY CHAPTER

Montgomery County enjoyed a fine array of programs and field trips and many opportunities to share birding experiences. Meetings usually are on the second Thursday of the month at 8 p.m. at the Potomac Presbyterian Church in Potomac, Maryland. It's a good idea to check the club calendar because of occasional changes. Visitors are always welcome.

Julie Kelly organized an excellent, wide-ranging calendar of monthly speaker programs that included Tony White's "Birds of the Bahamas," Craig Koppie's "Recovery of the Eastern Peregrine Population," Craig Faanes' "The Eskimo Curlew in the Lesser Antilles," Luther Goldman's "Aspects of Nature in National Wildlife Refuges," Karena Motivans' "The Habitat Benefits of Piping Plover Management on Assateague Island," Christine Montouri's "Bird Rehabilitation Pros and Cons," and George Jett's "Think Globally, Bird Locally." The January meeting was cancelled because of bad weather.

Linda Friedland put together a field trip program of over 50 trips—the most extensive program in years. Forays included beginners' trips, "seniors" trips, and a range of other outings both on weekdays and weekends.

In October the chapter sponsored a picnic at Black Hill Regional Park. Members enjoyed some good food and managed to find Red-headed Woodpeckers and other interesting species. The chapter's annual social, organized by Lydia Schindler, was held at the Far East restaurant in Rockville. About 125 members enjoyed the annual dinner. As usual the highlight of the evening was the open invitation for attendees to share their personal bird slides. Everyone had a great time.

Montgomery County continued to sponsor the Seneca Christmas Count, for which Bill Kulp coordinated the tally. Members participate in an ever-growing number of counts through the year.

*Louis DeMouy, President*

## PATUXENT BIRD CLUB

The Patuxent Bird Club held its regular monthly meetings at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center Bioscience Building on the fourth Tuesday of each month, September-November and January-May. This past year proved to be busy, productive, and rewarding.

At our meetings, Luther Goldman presented "Wildlife and Scenery of the National Wildlife Refuge System: a National Treasure"; Chandler Robbins spoke on "Winter Habitat Use by Migrant Songbirds in Central America"; Robert Ringler presented "Birds of South America"; David Wilcove of the Environmental Defense Fund discussed "The Endangered Species Act"; Daniel Boone presented "Maryland Wildlands"; Daphne Gemmill featured "Madagascar"; and Dr. William Oberman impressed us with "Tanzania's Wildlife Parks." Members night was highlighted with superb slide presentations by Paul Nistico, Luther Goldman, and Wayne Barnes.

Other activities included participation by club members in two joint birding trips with the Prince George's Audubon Society, Christmas, May, and Midwinter Bird Counts, and the annual field trip and picnic at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in June. Our Conservation Committee, chaired by Eleanor Robbins, carried out an active advocacy role on conservation issues.

The highlight of the year for our chapter was our participation in the Chandler S. Robbins dedication ceremony held by the MOS and the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center on June 9, 1996 to honor Chan for his 50 years of service in the U.S. Department of the Interior. This included dedication of the Chandler Robbins Nature Trail at the National Wildlife Visitor Center and dedication of a large area of forest in the Central Tract of the Research Center where Chan had been studying bird populations for 50 years. At the same ceremony, Marco Cerezo, Director of FUNDAECO, presented Chan with a plaque naming the biological station at the Cerro San Gil Ecological Reserve in Guatemala the Chandler Robbins Biological Station in recognition of Chan's efforts in forest conservation and ornithology education in Guatemala. Another of our members, Fred Fallon, was presented the MOS Valued Service Award for his dedicated conservation efforts.

*Tom Loomis, President*

## TALBOT COUNTY CHAPTER

Our fall program began in August with Sunday morning walks under the leadership of Jan Reese. The last Sunday of the month featured a day trip to the Delaware coast, led by Marge Baldwin. Additional trips to Cape Charles and Cape May were led by Harry Armistead and Hernson Steilkie. Levin Willey brought us to Blackwater Refuge. Les Coble, George Didden, and Don Merrit led autumn walks in local birding areas. The day of the Christmas Count, some members tallied birds at backyard feeders while others collected data in the field. The day closed with a pot luck supper, smoothly orchestrated by Bobbie Sinderman. John Snyder organized the data.

Spring brought new adventures as we headed for Pocomoke Forest under the leadership of Steve Ford. Ranger David Davis hosted our trip to Wye Island and Don Merrit led us along the trails at Horn Point. Les Coble, Danny Poet, and Jan Reese led the local outings. Frequently our Sunday morning trips are followed by breakfast at a chapter member's home. Hosts were Carolyn Mills and John Snyder, Linda and Paul Makosky, Marty and Sam King, Len and Ruth Warriner, Myra and Bill Novak, Reta and Vic Stover, Les Coble, Joyce and Don Merrit, and Nancy and Bernie Burns. The efforts of Jean Crump are responsible for coordinating this part of our program.

In the fall our three evening programs are held on the second Thursday of the month. They were launched in September with a presentation by Lucretia Krantz and Don Feron of the Wildlife Trust of North America. Live birds enhanced their talk. In October Dr. Stan Bysshe told us about his trip to Costa Rica with area high school kids. November brought Rich Dolesh who informed us about the protection of natural areas in Brazil. The spring meetings began in February with Dr. Trever reporting on his travels along the Snake River. March ushered Dave Brinker into our meeting to share his research on Saw-whet Owls in the mid-Atlantic states. Ben and Ross Hawkins visited us in April with a multi-media presentation starring the birds of Trinidad and Tobago. That evening we also met Rick Leader, the new Executive Director of Pickering Creek. None of these activities would have been successful without the tireless work of Myra Novak who persisted in getting our schedule into *The Star Democrat*.

Chris Sheldon, chair of the conservation issues committee, supplied us with information concerning environmental issues. Letters were sent to public officials concerning some of these issues. We had another good year.

*Liz Lawlor*, President

## **WASHINGTON COUNTY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

The Washington County Chapter continued to hold monthly meetings at the Mt. Aetna Nature Center on Mt. Aetna Road, generally on the fourth Tuesday. Speakers covered the following topics: Birds of Kenya, The Great Desert Basin, Birds of Australia, Owls, Planting for Wildlife, and Spring Wild Flowers. It is hard to believe no meetings were cancelled because of snow.

We started the year by participating in Indian Springs open house at Blairs Valley Lake. At this "Go Wild Day" we met lots of people, raffled off a bird book and signed up some new members. Later our membership voted to donate \$100 to Indian Springs Wildlife Management Area to the watchable wildlife program for a wildlife viewing boardwalk and platform. In September we bought a podium for the Mt. Aetna Nature Center.

We held our Christmas Count with 32 members participating; and 26 members took part in the May Count. We ran field trips to Emmitsburg, Indian Springs Wildlife Area, North Branch of the Potomac, Washington Monument State Park, C & O Canal, Piney Run Park, Gettysburg, and Blairs Valley.

Several members assisted with the spring and fall hawk migration counts at Washington Monument State Park. We also participated in the clean-up day at Carey Run Sanctuary.

Our season ended on a sad note with the death of Cam Lewis. He was one of our more active and most loved members. His presence will be missed by all of us who knew him.

*Dave Weesner, President*

## WICOMICO BIRD CLUB

Membership remained constant with 31 single and 18 household memberships. Attendance at the eight meetings averaged about 32 people. We were fortunate to have excellent speakers, two of whom were our own members making presentations on the International Crane Foundation and hosting an evening at the Ward Museum (featuring the exhibit "Shadow Birds"). The Maryland Department of Natural Resources provided three wonderful programs: "Scales and Tails," Otter Relocation, and Using Native Plant Materials in Landscaping. We also "joined" Bob Ringler on a slide trip to Costa Rica, and a local gardener shared ideas for gardening for hummingbirds and butterflies.

The eight field trips included Chincoteague, Bombay Hook and Blackwater Refuges, Deal Island Wildlife Management Area, Cape Henlopen State Park, Pocomoke River Drainage, and the Eastern Shore Birding Festival at the Bay-Bridge Tunnel. Our June trip to local birding areas will end with the traditional club picnic hosted by Carol and Donald Broderick. Charlie Vaughn coordinated club participation in the Audubon Christmas Bird Count and May Count. A number of club members participated in the October workday at Irish Grove and once again Ruth Denit graciously supplied turkey for our Irish Grove workers' mid-day meal.

Club members were active in our community (locally and at the state level) with representation on The Nature Conservancy, Maryland Partners in Flight, and the MOS Education and Conservation committees. The club continues to be involved with conservation issues, particularly with the Maryland Wildlands Campaign.

Our club was fortunate to receive two MOS education grants: the first (1994/95) supported our efforts with bluebirds, the second (1995/96) provided support for introducing the Audubon Adventures program in five local elementary schools. Three of our members will receive scholarships from MOS for summer camp activities.

*Linda Hardman, President*

# MARYLAND BIRDLIFE

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### Maryland Ornithological Society, Inc.



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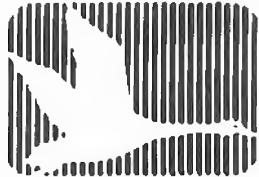
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# MARYLAND BIRDLIFE

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# MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Cylburn Mansion, 4915 Greenspring Ave., Baltimore, Maryland 21209

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**Cover:** Roger Tory Peterson. Drawing by Jon Boone, 1996.



## ROGER TORY PETERSON

### AN APPRECIATION OF HIS FIELD GUIDE ARTISTRY

JON BOONE

Nearly 88, on the morning before the day of his unexpected death, Roger Tory Peterson was at his drawing table painting a plate on accidental flycatchers for the culmination of his *raison d'être*—the fifth edition of *A Field Guide to the Birds*. For all his considerable achievements, this prolific man surely knew his essential legacy was lashed to the quality of the familiar Baedeker for birds he introduced in 1934.

More than 20 years ago, after a public career spanning almost a half-century, Peterson began his charge into old age. "The last years of my life," he said, "I intend to indulge myself." He had just married Virginia Westervelt and seemingly had emancipated himself from field guide illustration by painting a magnificent series of Audubonesque canvases. Financially secure and famous, he could have settled into meta-retirement mode *carte blanche*. Yet, like moth to flame, his final two decades were enkindled by his passion to perfect his field guide art. The elegance and beauty of the last two editions of field guides *East* and *West* (1980, 1990) bear witness that his reach embraced his grasp: he achieved artistic triumph in an evergreen celebration of his genius.

Given the desire to indulge himself in his later years, Peterson's obsession with his field guides seems curious, even ironic. He likened doing them to serving a prison sentence, to "sweating blood." In reality much of the labor was iterative, the fabrication of caricature in service to didactic formula—in many ways the most limiting form of illustration. As a young man, he yearned to do more "self-expressive art," work for the sake of itself unconnected to any other purpose; his ultimate goal, one he often confessed, was to create unfettered by any commercial direction. For a time, he did soar in the pursuit of this high artistic ambition. The paintings of Guy Coheleach, Robert Bateman, Fenwick Lansdowne, and Lars Jonsson encouraged his own series of more than 30 bird portraits, most of them painted between 1973 and 1978. All of these are magnificent; some are sublime, such as Snowy Owl (1976)<sup>1</sup>, Northern Mockingbird (1978), Barn Swallow (1974), and Brown Pelican (1986).

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<sup>1</sup>A watercolor masterpiece painted during Peterson's courtship of Virginia. Through its early stages, he was dissatisfied with the composition. Finally, Virginia suggested that he rotate the female owl's head so it directly faced the viewer. It was the ideal solution and Peterson wryly noted that it "improved the painting ten percent."

Still, nothing in his entire repertoire of paintings, drawings, photographs, and prose translated his vision of birds more effectively or efficiently than the art of his field guides. Aided by improvements in binoculars and spotting scopes, the guides gave the ordinary individual access to an enormous range of information which could be used to make field identification immediate and accurate. Peterson came to realize his field guides on birds had become a talismanic symbol of the environmental movement itself.

The craftsman in Peterson (he painted furniture for a time to support himself after graduating from high school) required that he refine his handiwork continuously. His pride of work, spurred over the years by worthy competitors and by the growth of his own knowledge and artistic skill, compelled him to improve each new edition. Certainly, by the middle of the 1970's, the artistic reputation of Peterson's field guides did face serious challenges. Numerous high quality photographs of each species were now available for field guide illustration. Moreover, the popularity of "nature art" gave millions an exposure to the sophisticated realism of Bateman, Coheleach and Lansdowne, among many others, which in turn raised expectations about the quality of field guide illustration. Paradoxically, the success of the "Peterson system" itself helped cultivate a more discriminating, knowledgeable generation of birders. Finally, Arthur Singer's brilliant portrayal of the entire continent's avifauna in one portable volume, the *Birds of North America*, brought the standard of quality to an audacious new level. Singer's birds were presented in habitat with varying postures and a wide range of plumages—a friendly, in-your-face gauntlet thrown down by a considerable talent.

Before 1930, bird watching was a rather incipient, clubby affair. Questions about identification were typically resolved by gunshot. Most books on birds were multi-volume tomes suitable for the library, although the best of these were handsomely illustrated by such luminaries as Peterson's artistic inspiration, Louis Agassiz Fuertes, as well as Allan Brooks, George M. Sutton, Bruce Horsfall and Lawrence Sawyer, nearly all of whom did commissioned work for the National Association of Audubon Societies before their paintings became cobbled to books. In contrast to today's boutique field guide variety, there was little a birder could bring to verify identification except a gun and a good companion.

As a student of painting in New York City, Peterson met some of the best ornithologists and bird painters at the American Museum of Natural History and Linnaean Society of New York, including especially Ludlow Griscom, the acknowledged expert of identification through the use of field glasses—not guns. From Griscom, he learned the "philosophy of the fine points of field identification ..." By 1930, in association with people in Griscom's circle, Peterson had formed a plan to do a basic identification book that people could easily carry to the field: It would be slender, similar to Chester Reed's *Bird Guide* (1906), the one Peterson himself used as a boy; systematic as Frank Chapman's *Handbook of Birds* (1930); and the "illustrations would be simple and patternistic, rather like the sketches that [Ernest Thompson] Seton had drawn in *Two Little Savages* (1903)."

### THE FIRST FIELD GUIDE

His "new plan" culminated in the April 1934 publication (Houghton Mifflin) of his eastern field guide, the first printing of which (over 2,000) sold out in two

weeks. By today's standards, it was crude, with only four single-sided color plates crowding an average of 20 birds on each. Black and white images dominated. This was, of course, a time for caution since the nation was in the very middle of the Great Depression. (The second edition in 1939 gained only four more black and white plates.) Nevertheless, Peterson did create a handbook that "boiled-down" matters so that generally any bird could be distinguished from any other at a glance or at a distance. And despite its embryonic nature, the book also showed evidence of what was to come later, ground as it was in a basic methodology.

That methodology remains "comparison and contrast." Salient field marks were indicated by arrows; bird pictures were intentionally simplified and shown in the same view and posture, with any difference in stance deliberate, representing a useful recognition trait; and similar species were placed together on one or a few plates to enhance the process of elimination. The aim was to provide a quick uninterrupted visual reference that would establish the unique plumage identity of a bird. Peterson was concerned that detail would distract the beginner (at that time most of his readers were beginners) from zeroing-in upon highlights. Consequently, he abandoned the realistic portraiture techniques he learned from Fuertes and from studying the works of the 19th century Swedish artist/naturalist Bruno Liljefors. Instead, he experimented with the most effective method for displaying his drawings.

He began to organize space in a way reminiscent of Japanese scroll ink paintings in the *haiga* tradition, particularly the works of such masters as Niten (early 17th century) and Bundo (1763-1840). *Haiga* is the pictorial counterpoint to the allusive, epigrammatic verse form, *haiku*; it is the essence of graphic minimalism guided by the (very Japanese) principle of expressing the most by means of the least. Text and graphic image entwine to create and define the space which contains them. This elegant sense of design has become a Peterson hallmark. His use of space was extremely sophisticated; so much so that most readers are unaware of its powerful influence—only its effect. However, he constructed the bird images in his early field guides as if they were semaphoric patterns, for that was precisely how he wanted people to see as they used his system.

The two plates of warblers and particularly the plate on "Grosbeaks, Finches, and Buntings, Etc." pulsate with ordered color, the birds encased in their air-brushed backgrounds as if set there by the most skilled lapidary, with arrows and numbers unobtrusively accenting the illustrations. The effect makes for a gem-like quality, giving a sense of weight to the schematic image. By contrast, the plates on Fly-catchers and Rails are an epigram of gray, the birds given shape by a subtle pattern of triangles and rectangles—all blended to inform just what we need to know. Finally, individual pen-and-ink drawings such as the Semipalmated and Wilson's Plover prefigure the basic iconography of his later work (most notably his 1979 *Penguins*).

## CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE

The War Department assigned Peterson the task of designing training manuals using his system for the identification of enemy aircraft during World War II. Before he enlisted, he completed (1941) the first edition of his western guide, with more color plates and considerably more birds than for his eastern edition. Then, a year after the war's end in 1946, Doubleday and Company published its *Audubon*

*Land Bird Guide* written by Richard Pough and sponsored by the National Audubon Society. Don Eckelberry, Peterson's friend and fellow artist, contributed 48 exquisite color plates covering mainly eastern birds from cuckoos to longspurs. Beautifully painted, these were full portraits arrayed in related groups on one or several plates, with no more than ten species on each plate. Many species were shown in a variety of plumages—male, female, immature. Each bird seemed ready to spring into action; many appear in three-quarter view, balanced against the dominant profiles—all connected through comparable postures. The best of these illustrations continue to influence artists today—the roadrunner, the anis, owls, flycatchers, swallows, thrushes, warblers (especially plates 28 and 29), and sparrows. What a challenge to Peterson's artistic ego!

Within the limits of his system, however, he met his new rival with creative dispatch. The post-war economy brought Americans the discretionary income that would drive the mass market of the western world. Because of improvements in the economy and in the technology for color processing, Houghton Mifflin gave him a more generous forum for the third edition of his eastern field guide. By 1947, Peterson had completely revised his previous editions with 36 new color pages. Like Eckelberry, he represented the range from cuckoos to longspurs, but then added a color plate for mergansers, hawks, the bills of terns, and several for gallinaceous, wading and shore birds. Since he included the latter, he painted twice the number of birds featured in the Audubon guide, yet fashioned a more compact handbook.

Recognizing the increasing sophistication of his readers, Peterson made extensive use of subtle highlights and shadow to give more of the illusion of solid form. As a result, there was a sharpness, a clarity which defined the birds of this new edition, rivaling the work of Eckelberry and in some cases surpassing it. Keep in mind that Peterson, as his many illustrations for *Life* magazine and for the national nature organizations in the 1940's bore witness, could do highly detailed bird portraiture. But he felt that his method of bird identification would not be nearly as effective if the birds in his field guides were rendered in detail: "As they are not intended to be pictures or portraits, modeling of forms and feathering is often subordinated to simple contour and pattern. Some birds are better adapted than others to this simplified handling, hence the variation in treatment. Even color is sometime unnecessary, if not, indeed, confusing."

His work in this edition is of very high quality, beginning with the deceptively effective roadside and flight silhouettes. Note again the way this master used negative space—the space around the bird images. Everything seemed to fit harmoniously, the birds floating on the page yet anchored to it. His ducks remain decoy-like figures to acknowledge their heritage from *Two Little Savages*. But his owls have the grace and authority to compare favorably with those of Eckelberry. His swallows were based upon crude wash drawings in his first edition, yet they have a small-scale majesty that demands attention. His thrushes are awash in browns and grays, yet almost glow with dimensionality.

Many people, such as the South Carolina artist, John Henry Dick, continue to believe these are among the finest of all bird illustration. Dick felt that Peterson's field guide drawings themselves had "arrived at a new art form," blending the impressionistic with the proper level of detail, harmonizing line, color, form, and space to create the perfect medium for communicating the wonder of nature. Dick never tired of Peterson's field guide plates—and hung them on his walls.

Peterson's third edition of his eastern guide remained unrevised for 33 years. Over those years, he moved his genre incrementally along by illustrating the *Birds of Britain and Europe* (1952), a second edition of his *Western Birds* (1961) and the *Birds of Texas* (1963), along with numerous other books, articles, wildlife stamps, and formal paintings. His reputation as an influential illustrator remained secure, and there was general acknowledgment among the elite bird art community that he was one among them.

In 1966, however, Arthur Singer raised the bar again with Chandler Robbins' Golden Press edition. Robbins wanted a guide for nearly all the birds of North America above the Mexican border in one volume. To get it, he crafted a model of efficiency and compactness. As a complement, Singer's plates shimmer with intelligence; his birds are essentially quick studies yet have a remarkable verisimilitude. They seem to burst out of the habitats in which he placed them. As Eckelberry did, he grouped relatively few birds to a page and presented them in many postures, picturing relevant plumage differences for each species. Like those of Peterson, the plates maintained a consistent quality, for they were the creation of one man, not a committee. Because all the birds of the northern continent were presented in phylogenetic order, one could see relationships between genera and families. In addition, the concise text and the range maps were placed on the left-hand page, providing an enormous amount of visual stimuli. The artistry of Singer's paintings was a perfect match for the resourceful editing.

The ornithological community soon embraced (if not adopted) the Robbins' guide. The "experts," many of whom started with Peterson, preferred the new comprehensive treatment; many also enjoyed the detail of Singer's birds in habitat. While Peterson had enormous respect (and affection) for Singer, his competitive spirit was awakened by Singer's achievement and by a growing criticism that his system was too limited and limiting. Peterson now had to prove his artistry anew.

After finishing the color plates for his wildflower guide (with Margaret McKenny) in 1968, he began a collaboration with Edward Chalif for *A Field Guide to Mexican Birds* (1973). With this book, he not only responded to Singer's challenge, he turned up the volume, revealing astonishing skills. Working as the Scholar in Residence of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in the seclusion of Frank Lloyd Wright's "Fallingwater," he distilled the knowledge which came from 50 years of observation and practice. Because of his own workload and the large number of birds to be included, he asked both George Sutton, the dean of American bird portraiture, and Don Eckelberry (who was increasingly interested in the birds of the tropics) to share the illustration work. After initially accepting, both eventually withdrew, leaving Peterson alone with the task of painting nearly 550 species and over 1,000 birds.

The bold, dramatic colors and shapes of the Mexican guide, barely contained in such compressed space, almost slash their way across the pages. Notice the plates on swifts, trogons, toucans, jays, oropendolas, and orioles. For the first time in his field guide format, he painted birds as "... portraits and at the same time somewhat schematic ..." While still in profile and with recognizable, easily comparable features, the birds were no longer two dimensional decals. Rather, many have distinct personas, like those grizzled veterans, the large birds of prey, and the presidential Jabiru. There is a voluptuous quality to these plates appropriate to life in the tropics. The intensity of the images is such that on occasion they over-crowd themselves on the page, weakening the image-space harmony characteristic

of his best work. Nonetheless, this was a profound affirmation of Peterson's skills, demonstrating that he belonged among the first rank of bird illustrators. There was to be much more.

## THE LEGACY

*Mexican Birds* foreshadowed the brilliance of the fourth edition of *A Field Guide to the Birds* (1980) and, a decade later, the third edition of *Western Birds*. Both represent Peterson's nature art at the apex of his creative powers. One can almost feel the cascade of his energy and vision as he worked out the design of each plate with paper cut-outs, crafted his final drawings, then laid in varying washes of watercolor and gouache, sealing the work in acrylic glaze. His art, of course, continued to be linked to his method. In these editions he seems to have resolved paradox, giving structure to gesture with consistent eloquence, harmonizing line, shape, color, space in contexts both subtle and intense. Nearly every bird is a nuanced portrait; even though they remain in profile, with similar sizes and contours, he captured their characteristic posture and traits—going beyond the form of the bird to reveal an almost intimate personality. For example, note the Brown Thrasher, Gray Catbird, Wood Thrush, Eastern Bluebird (that round-shouldered look!), Boat-tailed Grackle, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Wild Turkey, Wood Stork, King Rail, and the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in the eastern guide. See how he softens edges and gives texture in just the right places while, at the same time, he uses hard, daring line to secure the bird, holding it for a frozen moment in time. His astute modeling of form allows shadows to chase the light in an animating dance around his best portrayals—*viz.*, the Black-billed Magpie, Say's Phoebe, Clapper Rail, and Mountain Plover in the western guide.

Along with brilliant individual portraits, there are also dozens of whole plates that showcase a tapestry of consonant beauty. Consider just a few: the pelicans, woodcock and sandpipers, large shorebirds in flight, the red-headed woodpeckers, tyrant flycatchers, jays, nuthatches (very *haiga*!), tanagers, and, of course, the blue finches—all from the eastern guide, and from the western guide, cormorants, eiders and oystercatchers.

Strangely, the ducks continue to appear as if they are decoys. Though their form is modeled, they are presented rather stiffly and cut off abruptly at imaginary water lines. Why? In the first three editions of these works, Peterson's preface recounted how, in Seton's semiautobiographical story, *Two Little Savages*, the young hero, Yan, discovered some mounted ducks in a dusty cabinet, then made sketches of their patterns.

This lad had a book which showed him how to tell ducks when they were in the hand, but since he only saw live ducks at a distance, he was usually at a loss for their names. He noticed that all the ducks in the showcase were different—all had blotches or streaks that were their labels or identification tags. He decided that if he could put their labels or “uniforms” down on paper, he would know these same ducks as soon as he saw them at a distance on the water.

This is, of course, the genesis of the Peterson method of identification, a system that launched seemingly a thousand books (now over 50 in Houghton Mifflin's series) in pursuit of classifying nature. In his latest version of this edition, however, Peterson omitted any written acknowledgement to Seton. Instead, he paid

tribute visually, his ducks resembling Yan's decoy sketches made so long ago, stylistically separate from yet informing all the work to follow. A fitting, moving credit recognizing his intellectual origins.

For these recent bird guides, Peterson made some difficult decisions flowing from his notion of pedagogy as it influenced his strategy of illustration. First, some time ago, he concluded that drawings emphasized field marks much more effectively than photographs. Graphic artists can, in a variety of ways, edit the bird to best advantage: "Whereas a photograph can have a living immediacy, a good drawing is really more instructive." Consequently, while Peterson became an obsessive photographer, he decided not to rely on photographs of birds in his guides. Despite an explosion of field guides in the last 20 years which do feature photography (including recent volumes by Donald and Lillian Stokes), it is clear he was correct.

Second, by the mid 1970's, galvanized by the success of the Singer/Robbins' guide, Peterson continued to struggle with genuine "threshold" issues. Should he attempt a single handbook combining eastern and western birds? Should he, as growing numbers of critics demanded, provide illustrations for a substantial range of plumage variation, especially in such groups as gulls, water and shore birds? And should all relevant material about the bird, including range maps, be contained on a facing page? How much was too much? By 1983, the National Geographic Society published *Birds of North America*, with Eirik Blom as one of the senior consultants. This large, single volume answered all of these questions affirmatively. Peterson, however, chose not to do so, although he did make some practical concessions.

He ardently believed that too much detail created a visual overload, undermining the goal of more certain identification. This was true for beginners as well as for most experts. He thought there were diminishing returns in attempts to pinpoint nearly imperceptible differences between such species as, say, the Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks. Better to use supplementary reference guides (which have recently appeared on the market). Otherwise, whole pages could be devoted to sorting out plumage distinctions for a single species. Even if this were economically feasible, such a situation would create a significant barrier for most readers.

Fundamental to Peterson's pedagogy was the stark image of a bird turned to expose sufficient markers of its identity and arranged with birds of similar appearance so that direct comparison could take place. For optimum learning efficiency, he limited the number of field mark arrows (no more than four, typically two) and, for his recent guides, featured an average of four species to a plate, rather than the 10 or 12 as in previous editions. Further, he purposefully restricted such background detail as foliage because he felt it distracted from the bird itself. Of course, years before he determined that a single book for all the continent's birds was unwieldy, making nimble field identification less practicable.

He did accept a reasonable balance. Consequently, while he now brought the text together on the facing page with the drawing, he relegated the range maps to their own section, concluding they were too detailed to be generalized, then pinched within or around the text. In his *Western Birds*, he also significantly expanded his coverage of gulls and shore birds, though he fell far short of the comprehensive analysis some experts had desired. Again, he sought to reward the increased awareness of his readers but was unwilling to clutter his work with a seemingly endless potpourri of arcane distinctions.

Peterson generated hundreds of field guide plates of birds, just birds by themselves in all their shapes and sizes—large, small, slender, angular, rotund. That he was able to make each plate a lively festival of interest, giving his birds individuality and a proper sense of scale, is a tribute to his considerable abilities. There were occasional lapses: he sometimes misfired in getting the correct alignment of a bird's eye and bill (viz., the chickadees in the eastern guide, among others) and, in *Western Birds*, his addition of a sub-par painting of the Varied Bunting diminishes the perfection of the original blue finches plate. These are small matters when scored against the panoply of riches throughout.

Field guides have evolved since 1934 as a series of reciprocities among advancing technologies, skilled international organizations, and the expectations of a public largely made more knowledgeable about the natural world through each iteration of the guides themselves. At their core, however, resides the coordinated talents of remarkable individuals. Each produced wonderful publications. But Peterson was more than the flagship or the King Penguin of this enterprise. His art made him *nonpareil*. He wrote in the introduction to the fourth edition that *A Field Guide to the Birds* finally "has come of age." Indeed, like its author, it will endure for the ages.

1022 Cedar Ridge Court, Annapolis, Md. 21403

Received Dec. 2, 1996

## TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE IN HARFORD COUNTY, THE FIRST FOR MARYLAND

DEBORAH BOWERS

On the morning of March 22, 1996, I was looking out my office window—something I do a lot as part of my profession (I'm a writer). Drinking at our bird bath was a plain gray bird, much smaller and slimmer than a Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), and, I thought, also smaller than a catbird and not as dark. I got my binoculars and returned in time to see it fly into the tree above the bath.

It sat with its side turned to me. I first noted its size and shape, and its coloring—all gray, with no white breast like the mockingbird—then its small, black, sharp bill like that of a flycatcher. Then I noted a distinctive white ring around the black eye. At this point the lightcolored marking on the wing seemed indistinguishable—only that there was some marking there. When the bird turned toward me I could see a white streak on the underside of the tail.

Amazingly, the stranger continued to perch and I fetched my Peterson's Eastern Field Guide. I turned to the mockingbird, page 219, and there directly beneath the illustration of the mocker, was the exact bird I was looking at: the Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*), "a thrush." Each of the distinguishing marks I had noted was described, even the slight resemblance to the mockingbird "but note the eye-ring, darker breast, and buff wing patches."

Feeling a great sense of relief on having identified this odd bird, I almost neglected to check its range, but then read it was a "rare or casual winter visitor" in the east "to the Maritime Provinces and New England." Thinking only that it was unusual for this bird to be here, and excited that I had never seen it before, I wrote to Dave Webb, Harford Bird Club's field reporter. I mailed my brief note that day, adding the solitaire to a short list of birds I had seen recently and stating I was positive about the identification.

### **INQUIRY AND CONFIRMATION**

The very next afternoon, my phone rang. It was Dave Webb. He had received my note already and asked me to describe the bird. He asked me to call him if I saw it again, and as we spoke, the solitaire landed at the bath. Dave was on his way, and said he would stop in Bel Air to have an expert birder, Rick Blom, follow him. New to birding, and a member of the Harford County Bird Club for less than two years, I only vaguely realized the significance of my sighting and had no idea of the excitement it would cause.

My family lives adjacent to Rocks State Park, on its north side, about five miles south of the Pennsylvania line and about 12 miles north of Bel Air. We have about 75 acres of mixed woodlands and 20 acres of open fields of mixes grasses. Our house, and the brushy south-facing hillside of mixed conifers where the solitaire spent most of its time, is about 500 feet above Deer Creek.

Dave and Rick arrived, and within a half hour the solitaire landed at the bath and both Dave and Rick confirmed its identity. It stayed for only a few moments and then flew off toward the hillside. Within a few minutes we spotted it perched in a cedar tree, where it would spend a great deal of time over the next two weeks. We all watched it again through binoculars and scopes as it ate juniper berries and fluttered about like a flycatcher.

### **OBSERVERS**

Over the next 22 days about 100 people in small groups, coordinated by the Harford Bird Club, came to the hillside to see the solitaire. Everyone saw the bird, often for extended periods. Many members of the state Records Committee and birders from several states visited. Because of its feeding habits, and the particular trees it favored, the solitaire was visible during most hours and was seen many times at the bath. I now believe even more strongly in the advantage of having a bird bath to attract birds. I would never have noticed the solitaire without the bath, because solitaires do not eat seeds, and it never came to the adjacent feeders.

### **DEPARTURE**

There was only one day of the 22 that I didn't see the solitaire, I believe because it was raining all day and insect feeding was nil. Therefore, when a sunny day came that I didn't see it (April 14), I knew it was gone. I last saw it in the very top of an oak tree in our side yard, sitting a long time, on the evening of April 13. Temperatures in the region that night were in the low 50s.

## ACTIVITIES, BEHAVIOR

Observers saw the solitaire engage in activities at many different heights, from the ground, hopping around on a log, to the very top of a mature hickory (about 70 feet). While spending a great deal of time inside or on the outer branches of the cedar trees where it gobbled juniper berries, it also sprang out to catch insects, fluttering briefly like a flycatcher and then returning into the cedar or perching in an adjacent young poplar. It also ate holly berries.

The solitaire would always perch and observe the area prior to descending to the bath in our yard. Once when it descended to a branch just 10 feet above the bath and people were too close, it eyed us curiously while camera shutters were snapping and decided to postpone its drink.

Once the solitaire flew in a tight criss-cross pattern over the house and into a grove of cherry trees on the hillside. I assumed it was flying through a swarm of insects, as many were hovering in the air in the 60-degree temperature. The same day it used a fallen limb as a base for catching insects near the ground, alighting into the grass and quickly out again with prey.

The silhouette, flight pattern and wing and tail movements were immediately distinguishable from other birds, enabling me to spot the solitaire without binoculars. It could often be seen in a seemingly agitated state, shallowly and rapidly flicking its wings and shaking its tail like an Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*). The flight pattern was direct and swift.

The solitaire typically took long drinks at the bird bath, always in the morning and as late as dusk. I observed it 35 times at the bath during its 22-day stay, but on only one of these visits did it bathe. If disturbed it often would return within a few minutes to finish its drink.

### **Solitaire watches squirrel, is wary of cat**

The solitaire was very wary on its approaches to the bath, and made obvious judgments about when to land at the water. One afternoon it perched above the bath and observed the area. When a squirrel hopped onto the bath, the solitaire flew into the nearby holly tree as if to hide. But almost immediately following the squirrel's departure, and while the animal was still on the ground underneath the bath, the thirsty solitaire descended to drink.

However, the solitaire would not descend to the bath when our big white cat was sitting beneath it. When I called the cat into the house, the solitaire descended within seconds. The cat has snagged birds off the rim of the bath.

## SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

The solitaire seemed bothered by other birds coming too close when it was perching, but its annoyance seemed to be selective. On a day that it postponed use of the water because of people too close, it later returned to a limb near the bath to find a Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*) at the water. It watched only briefly, grew

impatient, chased the jay away, and at last got an apparently overdue drink. But not for long. An American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) landed and the solitaire backed off, perched a few feet away, attempted again but fell back with the robin didn't move, and finally waited for its turn. The solitaire didn't mind joining other, smaller birds at the bath.

### **Curious Companion**

On a gray and chilly morning, the solitaire flew from the bath to the top of a hardwood tree on the hillside and sat for about ten minutes only about one foot away from a black bird I couldn't identify. When the solitaire flew off to the top of a nearby hickory tree, the black bird followed and perched near the solitaire.

### **Camaraderie with Eastern Bluebirds**

At the edge of an oak-dominated woodland not far from the mixed hillside, the solitaire perched briefly on top of a bluebird box where a pair of Eastern Bluebirds (*Sialia sialis*) quickly responded. The male bluebird appeared to defend the box, but there appeared not to be any actual annoyance at the presence of the solitaire. In fact, later the same evening, as the sun was setting, the solitaire seemed to be enjoying some camaraderie with the same pair of bluebirds, which had taken up hunting insects in a field about 200 feet away. Using a large fallen limb to perch upon, the three birds flitted from snag to snag catching insects.

### **Calling all Solitaires**

On April 9 when I came home from errands, I heard a complex and beautiful song in the side yard. It was the solitaire atop a budding lilac bush. He wasn't bothered by my approach and continued to sing. The song is described in the Audubon Land Bird Guide as "one of the finest of bird songs, with clear, brilliant, ringing notes that rise and fall in pitch and volume as the bird warbles and trills."

### **The Solitaire and People**

The solitaire did not seem at all bothered by people unless they were too close to the bath when he came to drink. Often people were present in the yard about 25 to 30 feet away when he approached the bath and he was not bothered, but 15 feet was too close.

One evening on the hillside as I was returning from a walk in the woods, I decided to try to see him close up. I found him perching on the limb of a small hardwood tree beside one of his favored cedars and I slowly approached. As I continued to move closer, he simply watched me. I stopped at a distance of about 20 feet. He didn't flinch, but sat on the bare limb calmly staring at me. Even when I turned to go, making a lot of commotion picking my way through the thicket, he remained on the limb.

Everyone agreed the solitaire was a most accommodating subject.

*900 La Grange Road, Street, MD 21154*

*Received May 14, 1996*

## STATEWIDE MAY COUNT, 1995

LEANNE J. PEMBURN

Most of Maryland was blessed with beautiful weather and a very good warbler flight this year. Some of the better finds included an Anhinga in Wicomico County, a Surf Scoter in Garrett, a Black Tern in Harford, and an American Pipit in Frederick County. With only one "county" (District of Columbia) yet to file results, we have a total of 250 species, with 185,817 individuals counted. The high number for individuals of one species was Common Grackle, with 12,570 individuals, edging out European Starling, with 11,450 individuals.

To date 529 people are listed as participating in the May Count. Thanks to everyone, once again. We wouldn't have all this lovely data without you. District of Columbia, and Somerset and Worcester are crying out for counters. We're missing some great species and great birding out there. Maybe next year...

Table 1. Statewide May Count, 1995

|                            | Alleg. | AA. | Balt. | Calvt. | Crn. | Carr. | Cecil. | Chas. | Dorch. | Fredk. | Garr. |
|----------------------------|--------|-----|-------|--------|------|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------|-------|
| Common Loon                | 5      | 8   | 4     | -      | -    | -     | -      | 7     | 21     | -      | 3     |
| Pied-billed Grebe          | 2      | -   | -     | 4      | -    | -     | -      | 1     | 1      | -      | -     |
| Horned Grebe               | 1      | -   | -     | -      | -    | -     | -      | -     | -      | -      | -     |
| Double-crested Cormorant   | -      | 38  | 147   | -      | 13   | -     | 404    | 94    | 88     | 15     | 1     |
| Anhinga**                  | -      | -   | -     | -      | -    | -     | -      | -     | -      | -      | -     |
| American Bittern           | -      | -   | -     | -      | -    | -     | -      | -     | -      | 1      | -     |
| Least Bittern              | -      | -   | -     | -      | -    | -     | -      | -     | 7      | -      | -     |
| Great Blue Heron           | 1      | 47  | 169   | 43     | 32   | 3     | 64     | 167   | 86     | 24     | 5     |
| Great Egret                | -      | 1   | 3     | 6      | -    | -     | 4      | -     | 48     | -      | -     |
| Snowy Egret                | -      | 5   | 11    | -      | -    | -     | 1      | -     | 57     | -      | -     |
| Little Blue Heron          | -      | -   | -     | 1      | -    | -     | 10     | -     | -      | -      | -     |
| Cattle Egret               | -      | -   | -     | -      | -    | -     | 32     | -     | 2      | -      | -     |
| Green Heron                | 3      | 10  | 12    | 7      | 3    | 3     | 5      | 11    | 6      | 16     | 9     |
| Black-crowned Night-Heron  | -      | 3   | 7     | -      | -    | -     | -      | -     | 5      | -      | -     |
| Yellow-crowned Night-Heron | -      | -   | 3     | -      | -    | -     | -      | -     | -      | -      | -     |
| Glossy Ibis                | -      | 1   | -     | -      | -    | -     | 10     | -     | 6      | -      | -     |
| Tundra Swan                | -      | -   | 1     | -      | -    | -     | -      | -     | 2      | 1      | -     |
| Mute Swan                  | -      | 6   | -     | 7      | 1    | -     | -      | 1     | 29     | -      | -     |
| Snow Goose*                | -      | -   | -     | -      | 5    | -     | -      | -     | 2      | -      | -     |
| Canada Goose               | 50     | 79  | 274   | 38     | 41   | 107   | 37     | 205   | 93     | 492    | 123   |
| Wood Duck                  | 58     | 13  | 54    | 31     | 18   | 7     | 11     | 39    | 25     | 33     | 65    |
| Green-winged Teal          | -      | -   | -     | -      | -    | -     | -      | -     | 2      | -      | -     |
| American Black Duck        | -      | -   | 4     | 5      | -    | -     | -      | -     | 27     | -      | -     |
| Mallard                    | 40     | 216 | 186   | 92     | 132  | 36    | 32     | 115   | 115    | 107    | 199   |
| Northern Pintail           | -      | -   | -     | -      | -    | -     | -      | -     | -      | -      | -     |
| Blue-winged Teal           | 3      | -   | 2     | -      | -    | -     | -      | 1     | 6      | -      | 2     |
| Northern Shoveler          | -      | -   | -     | -      | -    | -     | -      | -     | -      | -      | -     |
| Gadwall                    | -      | -   | 2     | -      | -    | -     | -      | -     | 2      | -      | -     |
| Canvasback                 | -      | -   | -     | -      | -    | -     | -      | -     | 1      | -      | -     |
| Ring-necked Duck           | 1      | -   | -     | -      | -    | -     | 1      | -     | -      | -      | 1     |
| Lesser Scaup               | -      | 5   | 30    | -      | -    | -     | -      | 2     | 1      | -      | -     |
| Oldsquaw                   | -      | -   | -     | 2      | -    | -     | -      | 1     | -      | -      | -     |
| Surf Scoter                | -      | -   | -     | 1      | -    | -     | -      | -     | -      | -      | 1     |
| Scoter sp.                 | -      | -   | -     | -      | -    | -     | -      | 1     | 9      | -      | -     |
| Clapper Rail               | -      | -   | -     | -      | -    | -     | -      | -     | 11     | -      | -     |



*Garrett County Observers: Front Row, Connie Skipper, Bill Pope, Kevin Dodge, Connie Beachy, Fran Pope. Back Row, Jeff Opel, Danny Quinn, Gerry Lawton, Jeff Shenot, Judy Sconyers, Ken Bauer, Shiela Hughes. Photo by Craig Phillips.*

Table 1 (cont'd). Statewide May Count, 1995

| <u>Harfd.</u> | <u>Howd.</u> | <u>Kent.</u> | <u>Mont.</u> | <u>P.G.</u> | <u>Q.A.</u> | <u>St.M.</u> | <u>Somt.</u> | <u>Tabl.</u> | <u>Wash.</u> | <u>Wico.</u> | <u>Worc.</u> | Total |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------|
| 3             | 9            | 6            | -            | 2           | -           | 10           | -            | 2            | -            | -            | -            | 80    |
| -             | 2            | -            | 1            | 2           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 13    |
| -             | -            | -            | -            | -           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 1     |
| 62            | 13           | 22           | 74           | 25          | 35          | 70           | 7            | 5            | 2            | 84           | 26           | 1225  |
| -             | -            | -            | -            | -           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | 1            | -            | 1     |
| -             | -            | -            | -            | -           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 3     |
| I             | -            | -            | -            | -           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 8     |
| 196           | 40           | 99           | 39           | 94          | 44          | 42           | -            | 24           | 8            | 22           | 3            | 1252  |
| 1             | 2            | 4            | 2            | 4           | 1           | 4            | 5            | 3            | -            | 1            | 5            | 94    |
| -             | -            | 1            | -            | 2           | 3           | 3            | 2            | 6            | -            | 1            | 1            | 93    |
| 1             | -            | -            | 1            | 1           | -           | 1            | -            | -            | 1            | -            | 1            | 17    |
| 27            | 3            | 9            | -            | 1           | 45          | 24           | 1            | 22           | -            | 5            | 11           | 182   |
| 12            | 24           | 13           | 24           | 14          | 4           | 6            | 6            | 3            | 9            | 4            | 0            | 204   |
| 3             | -            | -            | 3            | -           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | 1            | -            | 22    |
| -             | -            | -            | -            | -           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 3     |
| -             | -            | -            | -            | -           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 14           | 31    |
| -             | -            | -            | -            | -           | 1           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 5     |
| -             | 2            | 72           | -            | -           | 14          | 19           | -            | 12           | -            | -            | -            | 163   |
| -             | -            | 13           | -            | -           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 11           | 31    |
| 409           | 500          | 142          | 522          | 400         | 22          | 28           | 138          | 9            | 210          | 155          | 21           | 409   |
| 20            | 40           | 30           | 79           | 151         | 7           | 7            | -            | 10           | 61           | 3            | 8            | 770   |
| -             | -            | -            | -            | -           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 2     |
| 9             | -            | 4            | 1            | 5           | -           | 1            | -            | 1            | -            | 5            | -            | 62    |
| 99            | 189          | 93           | 138          | 416         | 86          | 51           | 30           | 10           | 223          | 70           | 9            | 2684  |
| -             | -            | -            | -            | -           | 2           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 2     |
| -             | -            | -            | 2            | 6           | -           | 1            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 1            | 24    |
| -             | -            | -            | -            | -           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 1     |
| -             | -            | -            | -            | -           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 4     |
| -             | -            | -            | -            | -           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 1     |
| -             | -            | -            | -            | -           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 3     |
| -             | -            | -            | -            | -           | 2           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 40    |
| -             | -            | -            | -            | -           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 3     |
| -             | -            | -            | 1            | -           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 3     |
| -             | -            | -            | -            | -           | -           | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            | 10    |
| -             | -            | -            | -            | -           | -           | -            | 4            | -            | -            | 2            | -            | 17    |

Table 1 (cont'd). Statewide May Count, 1995

| Alleg.                    | A.A. | Balt. | Calvt. | Crln. | Carr. | Cecil. | Chas. | Dorch. | Fredk. | Garr. |
|---------------------------|------|-------|--------|-------|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------|-------|
| King Rail                 | -    | -     | -      | 1     | -     | -      | -     | 1      | -      | -     |
| Virginia Rail             | -    | -     | 35     | -     | -     | 1      | 5     | 66     | -      | -     |
| Sora                      | -    | 1     | 4      | -     | -     | 1      | -     | 1      | -      | -     |
| Common Moorhen            | -    | -     | -      | 1     | 8     | -      | -     | 8      | -      | -     |
| American Coot             | 2    | -     | -      | -     | 1     | -      | -     | 1      | -      | 2     |
| Black-bellied Plover      | 1    | -     | 60     | -     | -     | 20     | -     | 6      | 2      | -     |
| Semipalmated Plover       | 1    | -     | 6      | 7     | 61    | -      | 47    | -      | 27     | 13    |
| Killdeer                  | 25   | 38    | 28     | 8     | 41    | 15     | 25    | 23     | 73     | 21    |
| American Oystercatcher    | -    | -     | -      | -     | -     | -      | -     | 1      | -      | -     |
| Greater Yellowlegs        | 3    | 18    | -      | 2     | 7     | -      | 8     | 1      | 68     | 1     |
| Lesser Yellowlegs         | 10   | 19    | 270    | 10    | 14    | 1      | 9     | 5      | 8      | 48    |
| Solitary Sandpiper        | 13   | 24    | 39     | 2     | 2     | 15     | 8     | 13     | 9      | 63    |
| Willet                    | -    | -     | -      | -     | -     | -      | -     | -      | 29     | -     |
| Spotted Sandpiper         | 30   | 40    | 57     | 38    | 30    | 17     | 22    | 35     | 29     | 49    |
| Upland Sandpiper*         | -    | -     | -      | -     | -     | -      | -     | -      | -      | 1     |
| Ruddy Turnstone           | -    | -     | -      | -     | -     | -      | -     | 9      | -      | -     |
| Sanderling                | -    | -     | -      | -     | -     | -      | -     | 5      | -      | -     |
| Semipalmated Sandpiper    | 2    | 4     | 1362   | 10    | 67    | -      | 40    | 1      | 23     | 5     |
| Least Sandpiper           | 28   | 31    | 27     | 1     | 66    | -      | 29    | 1      | 151    | 62    |
| White-rumped Sandpiper    | -    | -     | 1      | -     | -     | -      | -     | -      | -      | -     |
| Peep sp.                  | -    | -     | 100    | -     | -     | -      | -     | -      | -      | -     |
| Pectoral Sandpiper        | -    | 1     | -      | -     | 3     | -      | -     | -      | 2      | -     |
| Dunlin                    | -    | -     | 227    | -     | -     | -      | 1     | -      | 229    | -     |
| Short-billed Dowitcher    | -    | -     | -      | -     | -     | -      | -     | 1      | -      | -     |
| Common Snipe              | -    | -     | -      | -     | -     | -      | -     | -      | -      | -     |
| American Woodcock         | 3    | -     | 1      | -     | -     | -      | -     | 1      | 11     | -     |
| Laughing Gull             | -    | 242   | -      | 263   | 424   | -      | 1     | 15     | 635    | -     |
| Bonaparte's Gull          | 1    | -     | 184    | 1     | -     | -      | 18    | 2      | -      | 3     |
| Ring-billed Gull          | 11   | 33    | 197    | 65    | 9     | -      | 358   | 94     | 56     | -     |
| Herring Gull              | 1    | 28    | 239    | 43    | -     | -      | 32    | 28     | 246    | -     |
| Great Black-backed Gull   | -    | 10    | 137    | 2     | -     | -      | 42    | 15     | 12     | -     |
| Gull sp.                  | -    | -     | 140    | -     | -     | -      | -     | -      | -      | -     |
| Caspian Tern              | -    | 1     | -      | -     | -     | -      | 85    | 3      | 2      | -     |
| Royal Tern                | -    | -     | -      | 1     | -     | -      | -     | 35     | 3      | -     |
| Common Tern               | -    | -     | -      | 13    | -     | -      | -     | -      | 5      | -     |
| Forster's Tern            | -    | 17    | 4      | 14    | 32    | -      | 27    | 3      | 121    | -     |
| Sterna sp.                | -    | -     | -      | -     | -     | -      | -     | -      | -      | -     |
| Least Tern                | -    | 7     | 22     | 4     | -     | -      | -     | -      | 2      | -     |
| Black Tern*               | -    | -     | -      | -     | -     | -      | 1     | -      | -      | -     |
| Rock Dove                 | 321  | 93    | 282    | 6     | 68    | 67     | 65    | 57     | 24     | 170   |
| Mourning Dove             | 95   | 191   | 444    | 156   | 90    | 135    | 111   | 165    | 37     | 202   |
| Black-billed Cuckoo       | 10   | -     | 2      | 1     | -     | -      | 1     | 1      | 4      | 8     |
| Yellow-billed Cuckoo      | 38   | 16    | 22     | -     | 29    | 5      | 10    | 49     | 39     | 43    |
| Barn Owl                  | -    | -     | -      | -     | -     | -      | -     | 1      | 1      | -     |
| Eastern Screech-Owl       | 1    | -     | 1      | 3     | -     | -      | 1     | 3      | 6      | 6     |
| Great Horned Owl          | -    | -     | 2      | 2     | 2     | -      | 4     | -      | 5      | 2     |
| Barred Owl                | 1    | 3     | 10     | 3     | 2     | 1      | 2     | 8      | 3      | 8     |
| Northern Saw-whet Owl     | -    | -     | -      | -     | -     | -      | -     | -      | -      | 9     |
| Common Nighthawk          | 3    | 4     | 3      | -     | -     | -      | 6     | -      | 2      | 3     |
| Chuck-will's-widow        | -    | -     | -      | 5     | -     | -      | 2     | 7      | 11     | -     |
| Whip-poor-will            | 9    | -     | 7      | 6     | 6     | -      | 16    | 9      | 15     | -     |
| Chimney Swift             | 123  | 149   | 265    | 105   | 37    | 105    | 146   | 79     | 62     | 160   |
| Ruby-throated Hummingbird | 13   | 8     | 26     | 38    | 19    | 9      | 5     | 11     | 3      | 11    |
| Belted Kingfisher         | 5    | 11    | 18     | 9     | 4     | 10     | 2     | 4      | 1      | 11    |
| Red-headed Woodpecker     | -    | -     | 1      | 1     | -     | 9      | -     | 13     | 4      | 12    |
| Red-bellied Woodpecker    | 50   | 71    | 178    | 41    | 44    | 65     | 38    | 81     | 25     | 100   |
| Yellow-bellied Sapsucker  | -    | -     | -      | -     | -     | -      | -     | -      | -      | -     |
| Downy Woodpecker          | 36   | 35    | 74     | 27    | 9     | 15     | 21    | 18     | 16     | 48    |
| Hairy Woodpecker          | 14   | 6     | 22     | 7     | 2     | 3      | 5     | 7      | 6      | 7     |

Table 1 (cont'd). Statewide May Count, 1995

| Harfd. | Howd. | Kent. | Mont. | P.G. | Q.A. | St.M. | Somt. | Talb. | Wash. | Wico. | Worc. | Total |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 3      | -     | 1     | -     | 1    | -    | 1     | 2     | 1     | -     | -     | -     | 11    |
| 2      | -     | 6     | -     | 1    | -    | 2     | 1     | 16    | -     | -     | -     | 135   |
| 2      | -     | 1     | -     | 1    | -    | -     | -     | 1     | -     | -     | -     | 12    |
| -      | -     | -     | -     | -    | -    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 17    |
| -      | 1     | -     | 4     | 1    | -    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 13    |
| -      | -     | 14    | -     | -    | -    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 103   |
| -      | -     | 1     | -     | 15   | 7    | 7     | -     | -     | -     | 86    | -     | 278   |
| 37     | 53    | 30    | 9     | 47   | 37   | 47    | 7     | 20    | 53    | 46    | 3     | 729   |
| -      | -     | -     | -     | -    | -    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 1     |
| 11     | 7     | 12    | 3     | 35   | 5    | 3     | -     | 2     | 3     | 7     | -     | 196   |
| 11     | 3     | 11    | 2     | 18   | 2    | 6     | 0     | 8     | -     | -     | -     | 456   |
| 24     | 85    | 5     | 15    | 11   | 8    | 8     | -     | 7     | 16    | 4     | -     | 382   |
| -      | -     | -     | -     | -    | -    | -     | -     | 4     | -     | 3     | 1     | 37    |
| 39     | 66    | 7     | 48    | 70   | 7    | 64    | -     | 11    | 44    | 7     | 1     | 741   |
| -      | -     | -     | -     | 1    | -    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 2     |
| -      | -     | -     | -     | -    | -    | -     | -     | 7     | -     | -     | -     | 16    |
| -      | -     | -     | -     | -    | 3    | 6     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 14    |
| 2      | 2     | 7     | 5     | 6    | -    | 14    | -     | 4     | -     | 11    | -     | 1568  |
| 43     | 37    | 360   | 4     | 2    | 4    | 37    | -     | -     | -     | 5     | -     | 888   |
| -      | -     | -     | -     | -    | -    | 1     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 2     |
| -      | 3     | -     | -     | -    | 10   | 3     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 116   |
| 1      | -     | 2     | -     | -    | 1    | 4     | -     | 2     | -     | -     | -     | 16    |
| -      | -     | 17    | -     | -    | -    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 474   |
| -      | -     | -     | -     | 3    | -    | 4     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 8     |
| 1      | -     | 1     | -     | 3    | -    | -     | -     | -     | 2     | -     | -     | 7     |
| 12     | 1     | -     | -     | -    | -    | -     | 1     | -     | -     | 1     | -     | 49    |
| 2      | -     | 68    | -     | 178  | 109  | 224   | 96    | 234   | -     | 267   | 7     | 2765  |
| 4      | -     | 23    | -     | -    | -    | 38    | -     | 2     | -     | -     | -     | 276   |
| 190    | 40    | 783   | 12    | 29   | 191  | 158   | -     | 8     | 2     | 41    | -     | 276   |
| 7      | 34    | 114   | 8     | 5    | 3    | 86    | -     | 1     | -     | 13    | 1     | 889   |
| 5      | -     | 9     | -     | 1    | -    | 24    | -     | 3     | -     | 6     | -     | 266   |
| -      | 13    | -     | -     | -    | 36   | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 49    |
| 40     | -     | 7     | -     | 1    | -    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 49    |
| -      | -     | 1     | -     | -    | -    | 11    | 2     | 1     | -     | 47    | -     | 101   |
| -      | -     | -     | -     | -    | 2    | 7     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 27    |
| 9      | -     | 22    | -     | 42   | 22   | 44    | 1     | -     | -     | 18    | -     | 376   |
| -      | -     | -     | -     | -    | 2    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 2     |
| 25     | -     | -     | -     | -    | 9    | 2     | -     | 9     | -     | -     | 7     | 87    |
| 1      | -     | -     | -     | -    | -    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 2     |
| 64     | 281   | 36    | 45    | 116  | 22   | 13    | 3     | 7     | 146   | 23    | 13    | 2019  |
| 274    | 481   | 19    | 130   | 279  | 68   | 178   | 19    | 67    | 175   | 57    | 10    | 3499  |
| 1      | 4     | 4     | 3     | 2    | -    | -     | -     | -     | 5     | -     | -     | 49    |
| 16     | 19    | 9     | 94    | 42   | 14   | 13    | 6     | 23    | 17    | 41    | 9     | 559   |
| -      | -     | 2     | -     | 20   | -    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 24    |
| 15     | 1     | 7     | -     | -    | -    | 6     | -     | 1     | 3     | -     | -     | 55    |
| 18     | 10    | 6     | -     | 3    | 1    | 6     | -     | 6     | 3     | -     | -     | 72    |
| 6      | 10    | 8     | 5     | 11   | 6    | 3     | 0     | 4     | 12    | 1     | 0     | 113   |
| -      | -     | -     | -     | -    | -    | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | -     | 9     |
| 5      | 198   | 1     | 9     | 4    | -    | -     | -     | -     | 30    | -     | -     | 268   |
| -      | -     | 1     | -     | 3    | -    | 24    | 1     | 7     | -     | 1     | -     | 62    |
| 32     | -     | -     | 1     | 2    | 1    | 18    | 2     | 2     | -     | -     | -     | 128   |
| 99     | 409   | 137   | 132   | 159  | 37   | 168   | -     | 27    | 071   | 40    | 9     | 2746  |
| 23     | 24    | 19    | 9     | 22   | 3    | 17    | 18    | 5     | 14    | 10    | 1     | 359   |
| 10     | 17    | 4     | 9     | 12   | 3    | 8     | 1     | 2     | 18    | 1     | -     | 164   |
| 1      | -     | 1     | -     | -    | -    | 7     | -     | -     | 5     | -     | -     | 55    |
| 110    | 280   | 56    | 127   | 144  | 39   | 41    | 2     | 13    | 74    | 21    | 5     | 1649  |
| -      | -     | 2     | -     | -    | -    | -     | -     | -     | 2     | -     | -     | 4     |
| 45     | 128   | 35    | 38    | 34   | 19   | 30    | -     | 6     | 48    | 16    | -     | 734   |
| 9      | 25    | 8     | 12    | 14   | 9    | 6     | -     | 5     | 7     | 6     | 2     | 205   |

**Table 1 (cont'd). Statewide May Count, 1995**

**Table 1 (cont'd).** Statewide May Count, 1995

**Table 1 (cont'd). Statewide May Count, 1995**

**Table 1 (cont'd). Statewide May Count, 1995**

Table 1 (cont'd). Statewide May Count, 1995

|                        | Alleg. | AA   | Balt. | Calvt. | Crin. | Carr. | Cecil. | Chas | Dorch. | Fredk. | Garr. |
|------------------------|--------|------|-------|--------|-------|-------|--------|------|--------|--------|-------|
| Swamp Sparrow          | 3      | 19   | 59    | 4      | -     | 1     | 4      | 5    | -      | 3      | 34    |
| White-throated Sparrow | 9      | 30   | 64    | 17     | 2     | 17    | 6      | 1    | 2      | 5      | 4     |
| White-crowned Sparrow  | 6      | -    | 2     | -      | -     | 7     | -      | -    | -      | 5      | 4     |
| Dark-eyed Junco        | -      | -    | -     | 4      | -     | -     | -      | -    | -      | -      | 5     |
| Bobolink               | 19     | 88   | 389   | 51     | 100   | 62    | 11     | 127  | 8      | 185    | 136   |
| Red-winged Blackbird   | 91     | 578  | 739   | 236    | 467   | 229   | 276    | 332  | 635    | 466    | 374   |
| Eastern Meadowlark     | 25     | 7    | 8     | 6      | 10    | 17    | 18     | 23   | 43     | 68     | 49    |
| Rusty Blackbird*       | 16     | -    | -     | -      | -     | -     | -      | -    | -      | -      | 1     |
| Boat-tailed Grackle    | -      | -    | -     | -      | -     | -     | -      | -    | 12     | -      | -     |
| Common Grackle         | 251    | 533  | 643   | 449    | 949   | 480   | 342    | 477  | 735    | 991    | 261   |
| Brown-headed Cowbird   | 64     | 77   | 182   | 152    | 106   | 46    | 101    | 35   | 77     | 65     | 116   |
| Blackbird sp.          | -      | -    | -     | -      | -     | -     | -      | -    | -      | -      | -     |
| Orchard Oriole         | 15     | 27   | 33    | 10     | 80    | 7     | 28     | 29   | 46     | 11     | 6     |
| Northern Oriole        | -      | -    | -     | -      | 54    | -     | -      | -    | -      | -      | -     |
| Purple Finch           | -      | -    | 2     | -      | -     | -     | -      | -    | -      | -      | 14    |
| House Finch            | 81     | 237  | 356   | 139    | 63    | 126   | 64     | 70   | 23     | 267    | 77    |
| Pine Siskin            | -      | -    | -     | -      | -     | -     | -      | -    | -      | -      | 8     |
| American Goldfinch     | 84     | 106  | 329   | 110    | 41    | 88    | 87     | 36   | 30     | 240    | 180   |
| House Sparrow          | 73     | 93   | 239   | 52     | 232   | 242   | 38     | 57   | 26     | 317    | 71    |
| Total Species:         | 144    | 149  | 169   | 145    | 120   | 110   | 146    | 137  | 177    | 147    | 150   |
| Total Individuals:     | 5324   | 8349 | 19621 | 5687   | 6601  | 5391  | 6373   | 6126 | 7757   | 10441  | 7662  |
| Party-hours:           | 67.5   | 75   | 178   | 69     | 54    | 36    | 36     | 67   | 45.5   | 98     | 147.5 |
| Observers:             | 15     | 25   | 58    | 20     | 15    | 14    | 10     | 11   | 8      | 22     | 38    |
| Parties:               | 11     | 10   | 28    | 121    | 7     | 7     | 5      | 6    | 3      | -      | -     |

## OBSERVERS

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Table 1 (cont'd.). Statewide May Count, 1995

| Harfd. | Howd. | Kent. | Mont. | PG.   | QA.  | St.M  | Somt. | Tab. | Wash. | Wico. | Worc. | Total  |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| 10     | 28    | 2     | -     | 4     | 1    | 4     | -     | 1    | 1     | -     | -     | 183    |
| 21     | 103   | 12    | 9     | 19    | 15   | -     | -     | 4    | 21    | -     | -     | 361    |
| 3      | 9     | 8     | 4     | 1     | -    | -     | -     | -    | 3     | -     | -     | 52     |
| -      | -     | 4     | -     | -     | -    | 1     | -     | -    | -     | -     | -     | 14     |
| 396    | 455   | 15    | 36    | 20    | 11   | 265   | -     | -    | 14    | -     | 1     | 2389   |
| 409    | 803   | 1539  | 129   | 557   | 297  | 576   | 49    | 126  | 242   | 3087  | 19    | 947    |
| 34     | 23    | 30    | 2     | 13    | 18   | 61    | 5     | 18   | 54    | 5     | 2     | 539    |
| -      | -     | 2     | 1     | -     | -    | -     | -     | -    | -     | -     | -     | 20     |
| -      | -     | -     | -     | -     | -    | 3     | 1     | 8    | -     | 4     | 4     | 32     |
| 1190   | 663   | 1189  | 302   | 386   | 349  | 1078  | 78    | 214  | 566   | 369   | 75    | 125    |
| 110    | 244   | 102   | 86    | 97    | 74   | 86    | -     | 35   | 76    | 113   | 1     | 2045   |
| -      | 2     | -     | -     | -     | 35   | -     | -     | -    | -     | -     | -     | 37     |
| 52     | 55    | 56    | 14    | 30    | 38   | 17    | 17    | 17   | 17    | 44    | -     | 649    |
| -      | -     | -     | -     | -     | -    | -     | -     | -    | -     | -     | -     | 54     |
| -      | -     | 3     | -     | -     | -    | -     | -     | -    | -     | -     | -     | 19     |
| 177    | 440   | 295   | 109   | 291   | 73   | 158   | 11    | 51   | 185   | 69    | 2     | 3364   |
| -      | -     | -     | -     | -     | -    | -     | -     | -    | -     | -     | -     | 8      |
| 185    | 430   | 87    | 166   | 165   | 43   | 84    | 20    | 26   | 297   | 45    | 16    | 2895   |
| 155    | 226   | 255   | 79    | 155   | 36   | 208   | 9     | 32   | 243   | 40    | 5     | 2883   |
| 163    | 146   | 165   | 142   | 159   | 133  | 159   | 82    | 131  | 142   | 124   | 82    | 250    |
| 13199  | 21280 | 11306 | 7904  | 10805 | 4154 | 10211 | 927   | 2539 | 8523  | 4997  | 640   | 185817 |
| 122    | 250   | 46    | 106   | 175   | 40.5 | 92    | 12    | 23   | 123   | 36.5  | 8.5   | 1908   |
| 43     | 63    | 18    | 45    | 51    | 12   | 18    | 3     | 4    | 25    | 8     | 3     | 529    |
| 17     | 39    | 6     | 21    | 23    | 9    | 11    | 2     | 4    | 14    | 5     | 3     | 244    |

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2617 Guilford Ave., Baltimore MD 21218

## BREWER'S BLACKBIRDS IN DORCHESTER COUNTY

MICHAEL O'BRIEN

On February 28, 1991, I observed five female Brewer's Blackbirds (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) in a flock of ten to twelve Rusty Blackbirds (*E. carolinensis*) along Shorter's Wharf Road in Dorchester County, Maryland. One or more males, heard singing, may also have been Brewer's Blackbirds.

The birds were observed sitting in a dead tree about 15 feet (4.6 meters) high and about 50 yards (45 meters) from where I was standing. The light conditions were good. It was approximately 45 minutes before sunset when I first saw the birds, and the sun was directly behind me but still high enough in the sky so there was no bias toward warm colors. I watched the birds through a Kowa TSN2 telescope with a 20-60X zoom eyepiece and 10X Zeiss binoculars.

The size and shape were very similar to Rusty Blackbirds but the chest was fuller and the abdomen was slimmer. This difference in body shape seemed responsible for a slightly smaller-headed and longer-tailed appearance in the female Brewer's. The iris was dark brown. The length and depth of the bill were not noticeably different than a Rusty Blackbird's, and therefore very different from the

bill of a cowbird (*Molothrus* sp.). The bill of the Brewer's had a perfectly straight culmen, however, lacking the subtle but visible curve seen on the bill of a Rusty.

The plumage was drab gray-brown, paler on the head and underparts and darker on the wings and tail. This pattern is similar to that of a female Brown-headed Cowbird (*M. ater*), but lacked any pattern on the throat and underparts. The color and pattern were very unlike the dark slate gray typical of the female Rusty Blackbird.

In addition to the three birds I studied closely, two other females were in the tree. Owing to the angle at which they were sitting, or because they were partly obscured by branches, they were not studied as closely. On one it was possible to see the dark eye, but not on the other, and culmen shape was not observed on either. Both had the distinctive body shape and plumage of the first three birds.

My attention was drawn to the flock when I heard a song that seemed similar to that of a Rusty Blackbird but was not quite as high-pitched and squeaky. It seemed intermediate between the song of a Rusty Blackbird and that of a Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*). In retrospect it seemed possible that this had been a male Brewer's Blackbird. I did not have the time to study all the male blackbirds present, and did not see a male Brewer's. Possibly I missed one or more male Brewer's in the flock.

The flock appeared to be working its way toward a roost along with large numbers of other blackbirds. The tree in which they were seen was part of a small island of pines in an extensive marsh. The observation lasted about three minutes.

The two previous reports of Brewer's Blackbirds for Dorchester County were published in *Maryland Birdlife* (12:91; 34:83): four at Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge headquarters on April 8, 1956 and one on the Southern Dorchester County Christmas Bird Count on December 30, 1977.

12 Duke St. South, Rockville, MD 20850

## YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS NEST IN TAKOMA PARK

LOLA OBERMAN

Here is a happy sequel to the report in *Maryland Birdlife* (51:147148), "Yellow-crowned Night-Herons Attempt Nesting in Takoma Park." It is worthwhile to bring the story up to date because Yellow-crowned Night Herons (*Nycticorax violaceus*) are rare in Montgomery County, and breeding records are few. A nest with eggs was reported at Seneca in 1939, and another in 1953. No further records occurred until 1969 when two nests were found 1 1/2 miles west of Seneca.

The birds had nested within the District of Columbia in 1951, 1952, and 1955, but had never been reported in Takoma Park before. Their presence adjacent to Sligo Creek might be attributable to the intensive cleanup efforts that rehabilitated the polluted stream and brought back fish and other aquatic life attractive to herons.

April 14, when the pair was first reported on a nest near Sligo Creek in the spring of 1995, was early in the year for nesting. The earliest Maryland date for viable eggs is April 21 (Iliff et al., *Field List of the Birds of Maryland*, Third Ed., MOS 1996). It was disappointing but not too surprising when the pair abandoned the nest.

A few days later, on April 18, the two birds appeared on the opposite side of Sligo Creek and were observed by a resident, Kate Britton, in apparent courtship behavior. When I arrived on the scene at dusk, she pointed out a haphazard collection of sticks that could have been a nest, and we saw one of the herons fly into the tree and perch. Within a few days this site was also abandoned and no further sightings of the birds were reported.

Then on an evening in mid-July 1995, we received a telephone call from Kate Britton, who announced with some excitement that while jogging in the park she had discovered the Yellow crowned Night-Herons again, and that they had a new nest in a different location, nor far from where she had first seen them.

My husband Ted and I hurried to the site she described and found the nest about 50 feet up in a sycamore tree alongside Sligo Creek. This time the birds had chosen a sturdier branch, one that hung directly above the well-traveled Sligo Creek Parkway. A prominent circle of droppings on the pavement beneath the nest was a helpful clue to its location.

Arriving after sundown, we were just in time to observe the changing of the guard, as one parent flew in to relieve the other at the nest where two fuzzy chicks raised their heads. Since the average clutch of Yellow crowned Night-Heron eggs is from three to five, it seemed likely that there were others on the nest that we could not see from the ground.

Returning on August 16, we found four young birds, now well feathered and flapping their well-developed wings, ready to take off. Other birders visiting the site a few days later saw neither adults nor young in the tree, but in subsequent weeks there were occasional reports of adults and immature birds perched singly on rocks in the creek.

There are no prior records of young Yellow-crowned Night-Herons on the nest this late in the season, July 14 being the latest date recorded in the Maryland-DC Atlas. The unsuccessful earlier attempts made by this pair could account for the late date of the final nest.

We entertained some hope that this success might encourage the birds to return to Sligo Creek and become the nucleus of a colony. That hope was fanned when Kate Britton called on March 30, 1996. The Yellow-crowned Night-Herons—surely the same pair—had put in an early appearance in the same sycamore tree alongside Sligo Creek and seemed to be taking possession of the old nest. Ted and I went over the following day and quickly spotted the two birds, huddled close together near last year's nest, a very promising sight.

We were out of town during most of April and did not return to Sligo Creek Parkway until May 8. To our dismay, we couldn't even find the nest, although we thought we knew the location very well. Walking up and down the parkway in our



*Photo by Ted Oberman.*

futile search, we met a birder who had just seen an adult heron on a rock in the creek, but we failed to find it.

Later we learned that a violent storm had swept through the area while we were away, felling trees and doing considerable damage. The sycamore limb on which the herons had nested had been broken off and the nest scattered.

No further reports of the unlucky birds arrived until August 4, when Kate Britton located them a quarter of a mile from the old site. They had built "a huge nest," she said, high above Park Crest Drive, and she had seen three young birds. On August 7, I had no trouble finding the nest, about 50 feet up in an oak tree. No adults were in sight at 11:00 a.m., but two young were in the nest, another perched on its rim, and a fourth was two feet out on the limb, flapping its wings experimentally.

Once again, this was a late date for young on the nest, but in both years the destruction of the first nest could account for the delay. It seems that the herons have found a favorable location in the Sligo Creek vicinity, and we have good reason to hope for their return in 1997.

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